United Nations S/PV.4482

Security Council

Distr.: General
28 February 2002

Original: English

Official communiqué of the 4482nd (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 28 February 2002, at 10.45 a.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"At its 4482nd meeting, held in private on 28 February 2002 at 10.45 a.m., the Security Council considered the item entitled 'Wrap-up discussion on the work of the Security Council for the current month'.

"The President, with the consent of the Council, invited the representatives of Angola, Argentina, Burundi, Chile, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Japan, Nepal, Spain, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey and Ukraine to participate in the discussion of the item without the right to vote in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

"The members of the Council and representatives invited under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure had a constructive discussion."

02-26677 (E) 280202

United Nations S/PV.4483

Security Council

Distr.: General
4 March 2002

Original: English

Official communiqué of the 4483rd (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 4 March 2002, at 3.30 p.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"On 4 March 2002, the Security Council, pursuant to Annex II, Section A of resolution 1353 (2001), held its 4483rd meeting in private with the troop-contributing countries to the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC).

"The Security Council and the troop-contributing countries heard a briefing under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure by Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

"The members of the Council had a constructive exchange of views with representatives of participating troop-contributing countries."

02-27126 (E) 040302

United Nations S/PV.4484

Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4484th meeting

Tuesday, 5 March 2002, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Petersen	(Norway)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Belinga-Eboutou
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Guinea	Mr. Diallo
	Ireland	Mr. Corr
	Mauritius	Mr. Gokool
	Mexico	Ms. Lajous
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Singapore	Mr. Yap
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Wehbe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Letter dated 26 February 2002 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2002/209).

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

02-27239 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Expression of thanks to the retiring President

The President: As this is the first meeting of the Security Council for the month of March, I should like to take the opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to His Excellency Mr. Adolfo Aguilar Zinser, Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations, for his service as President of the Security Council for the month of February 2002. I am sure that I speak for all members of the Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Aguilar Zinser for the great diplomatic skill with which he conducted the Council's business last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Letter dated 26 February 2002 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2002/209)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Spain, Ukraine and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Kusljugic (Bosnia and Herzegovina) took a seat at the Council table; Mrs. Šimonović (Croatia), Mr. Arias (Spain), Mr. Kuchinsky (Ukraine) and Mr. Šahović (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Wolfgang Petritsch, High Representative for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Petritsch to take a seat at the Council table.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Jacques Paul Klein, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Coordinator of United Nations Operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Klein to take a seat at the Council table.

I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter dated 1 March 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations, which reads as follows.

> "I have the honour, in my capacity as representative of the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, to request that Javier Solana, Secretary-General of the Council and High Representative for Foreign Policy and Common Security, be allowed to participate in the Council meeting to be held on Tuesday, 5 March 2002, on Bosnia and Herzegovina, in accordance with rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council."

That letter has been published as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/2002/218. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 to Mr. Javier Solana.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Javier Solana to take the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2002/209, which contains the text of a letter dated 26 February 2002 from the Secretary-General, transmitting the report of the High Representative for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Members of the Council also have before them document S/2002/221, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

I welcome the presence at this morning's meeting of the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan, and I give him the floor.

The Secretary-General: Let me say how happy I am, Mr. Minister, to see you in the Chair and once again to welcome you to New York and to United Nations Headquarters.

This meeting signals an important moment of transition and consolidation in Bosnia. I would like to begin by paying tribute to the High Representative for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr. Wolfgang Petritsch, whose effective leadership helped secure the gains made by the international community over the last few years. I know he and my Special Representative, Mr. Jacques Paul Klein, worked well together, and I want to thank him for that cooperation as well. I would also like to salute the tireless efforts of my friend Javier Solana towards maintaining the momentum for peace and reconciliation throughout the Balkans. His presence here today signals the priority that the European Union attaches to the future of Bosnia.

The United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) is well on track to completing its core mandate by the end of 2002. I believe that the Council can be very satisfied with the work of UNMIBH as an advocate of reconciliation and as an agent of the rule of law — and, of course, with what it has achieved already. It has improved and integrated the police, while serving as a voice for coexistence, tolerance and cooperation at all levels of society. Through all those efforts, UNMIBH's civilian and police officers have done much to give the people of Bosnia faith in a better, peaceful and united future.

Specifically, UNMIBH has transformed and reduced the police force from a 40,000-strong war-time militia to a 16,000-strong professional police force. In addition, each police officer has been trained in human rights; selected groups have been trained in drug control, organized crime and crowd control; two multi-ethnic police academies have been established, in Sarajevo and in Banja Luka; and, at present, the State Border Service covers 75 per cent of the country's borders and has reduced illegal immigration through Bosnia and Herzegovina by two thirds.

Of course, UNMIBH has not been alone in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but is part of a broader international effort — including the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the European Union — which will continue. By the end of 2002, UNMIBH will have completed the peacekeeping phase of police restructuring. However, there will still be challenges to face for the Bosnians themselves and for the international community committed to helping them. Among these, in the area of the police, are low salaries and poor housing conditions, lack of funds and continued political interference in the work of law enforcement agencies.

There will undoubtedly continue to be a need for international monitoring and assistance in order to sustain the progress that has been made. I therefore welcome a recent decision by the European Union to establish a post-UNMIBH follow-on police mission to commence on 1 January 2003. The next phase of capacity-building in law enforcement, including improving judicial and penal systems, will therefore be carried out in the context of the European Union. The United Nations stands ready to cooperate closely with the European Union, the Office of the High Representative and others concerned to ensure timely planning and a smooth transition.

Ultimately, it is the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina who must take control of their own destiny and build a peaceful, prosperous future as a successful multi-ethnic State. It is my hope that they will find support and inspiration in the many countries around the world which have made their diversity their greatest asset, with opportunities for all in a climate of tolerance and mutual respect.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for the kind words he addressed to me.

Before giving the floor to those wishing to make statements, I invite participants to hear briefings from Mr. Wolfgang Petritsch, High Representative for the

Implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina, and from Mr. Jacques Paul Klein, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Coordinator of United Nations Operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I give the floor to Mr. Wolfgang Petritsch, High Representative for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr. Petritsch: When I took up my mandate in Bosnia and Herzegovina in August 1999, Yugoslavia and Croatia were ruled by the same leaders who had brought about the disastrous conflicts of the 1990s. Their proxies still wielded power in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Consequently, refugees saw little hope of returning to their homes. Reform was effectively blocked by wartime politicians, who did nothing to overcome the internal economic divisions and the virtual absence of an adequate legislative framework. State-level institutions had been established, but they were underfunded, understaffed and lacked real power. My predecessors, Carl Bildt and Carlos Westendorp, worked hard to correct this but were severely hampered by an uncompromising political climate inside the country and a lack of cooperation from Zagreb and Belgrade.

Faced with this situation, my strategy was clear. Since arriving in Bosnia and Herzegovina, I have vigorously promoted the creation of an investment-driven, rather than an aid-dependent, market economy; the mass return of refugees to their homes, by rolling back the results of ethnic cleansing; and the consolidation of institutions — legal, political, economic, social, educational and civic — that will sustain a viable democracy long after the international community has ended its extraordinary assistance and involvement in the country's affairs.

After 11 September, the potentially disastrous consequences of weak and failed States have been burned into our consciousness. The experience of Bosnia and Herzegovina has shown conclusively that countries cannot recover from war or protracted civil strife simply through material aid or military assistance. They need institutions that work and a culture in which laws are properly debated and universally applied and respected. Today, with regard to Afghanistan, even sceptics accept that institution-building must be at the core of successful intervention.

Consolidating the rule of law has underpinned our strategy in Bosnia and Herzegovina, since institution-building, refugee return and economic development can be promoted only in a secure environment of law and order. In this respect, the work of the International Police Task Force (IPTF), mandated under the Dayton/Paris Peace Accords to provide the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina with an efficient and impartial police service, has been key to the peace implementation efforts. I would like to take this opportunity to commend the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Jacques Paul Klein; the IPTF Commissioner, Vincent Coeurderoy; and the staff at IPTF and the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) for the strenuous efforts they have made in order to carry out this work.

On 18 February, the European Union's General Affairs Council announced that the European Union is ready to establish a police mission, which will take over from IPTF from 1 January 2003, as the Secretary-General has already indicated. The European Union Police Mission (EUPM), supported by the European Union's institution-building programmes, will contribute to peace implementation and to the European Union's overall policy in the region, notably the Stabilization and Association Process. It represents a unique opportunity for the European Union to develop its political engagement with Bosnia and Herzegovina and to support structural reform crucial to the country's Europeanization process.

Allow me to express my appreciation to the European Union's High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, for the decisive and constructive approach adopted by the European Union in undertaking the EUPM. The European Union's initiative was welcomed and accepted by the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council on 28 February. I have duly informed the Secretary-General of this.

Policing in Bosnia and Herzegovina will not be fully effective as long as there is a belief that certain individuals are beyond the reach of the law. In this respect, the work of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), and the cooperation given to ICTY by the Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities at the State level and in both entities, is crucial to the country's overall recovery.

Just a few days ago, Stabilization Force (SFOR) troops launched operations in eastern Bosnia to arrest Radovan Karadzic. Let me take this opportunity to thank the SFOR Commander, General John Sylvester, and his soldiers for these courageous undertakings, necessitated by the absence of credible efforts by the Republika Srpska authorities to apprehend and transfer to The Hague indicted war criminals hiding on their territory.

The entity of the Republika Srpska must be left in no doubt that as long as it fails to live up to its obligations, it will not receive the full backing of the international community. I remain firmly convinced that unless Radovan Karadzic, Ratko Mladic and other indictees end up in The Hague, people will not be able to turn the page and look to the future. The Serb Democratic Party (SDS), founded by Karadzic, has announced the expulsion of members indicted for war crimes. Yet the SDS will have to show practical and public support for the ICTY before this kind of statement is greeted with any sort of credence.

If approved by the ICTY under the 1996 Rome Agreement, commonly known as the rules of the road procedure, war crimes cases may be tried in Bosnia and Herzegovina courts. I am acutely aware of the sensitivity and importance of such trials, which not only are aimed at bringing perpetrators to justice but also play a key role in the overall reconciliation process.

In the light of a plan proposed by the ICTY Prosecutor last year regarding possible remission of ICTY cases to Bosnia and Herzegovina, my Office is currently engaged in discussions with ICTY and the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs here in New York with a view to cooperating on a consultancy project that will identify the resources that are needed to try more war crimes cases in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The consultancy will begin shortly. It is being funded by the Governments of the United Kingdom and Sweden, and will entail close cooperation with other United Nations agencies, international organizations and Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities.

While international efforts in the broad sphere of the rule of law have yielded results, progress in some areas has fallen short of expectations, because there has not yet been a thorough reform of the judiciary. The Judicial System Assessment Programme (JSAP), which had been set up by UNMIBH two years earlier, was terminated in November 2000. As a consequence of JSAP's closure, my Office was tasked to set up the Independent Judicial Commission (IJC). On 14 March last year, I issued the Decision formalizing the establishment of IJC and determining its mandate. However, IJC reported to me a rather alarming picture: judges and prosecutors, many of whom gained office during or immediately after the war on ethnic or political rather than professional grounds, are often unfit to carry out their duties. There is a lack of adequate financing, and courts are often subject to undue external influence.

Following a request from the Peace Implementation Council (PIC), last week I presented a reinvigorated programme of judicial reform measures for 2002-2003 to the Political Directors of the Steering Board. This combines a restructuring of the Bosnia and Herzegovina court system and a depoliticized appointment procedure with the introduction of a High Judicial Council. It also encompasses the reform of key laws, including civil and criminal procedure codes. The Council of Europe was invited to work on the details of the strategy in order to develop a system for Bosnia and Herzegovina that is compatible with modern European standards.

Indeed, the Europeanization of Bosnia and Herzegovina — crystallized in the imminent accession of the country to the Council of Europe and in the EU Road Map itemizing steps that Bosnia and Herzegovina must take in order to move closer to eventual European Union membership — is the overarching context for promoting the rule of law and advancing the main agenda of the international community for Bosnia and Herzegovina's recovery.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has reached a crucial juncture in its path towards permanent recovery. The main political parties are discussing how to implement the Constitutional Court's decision on the constituency of peoples throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina. Indeed, this is a test case of whether Bosnia and Herzegovina will develop into a State committed to human rights and the rule of law, and to the protection of the individual as well as that of Bosnia and Herzegovina's three constituent peoples and the group of the so-called others.

The implementation of this decision puts an enormous burden on the still fragile political system in

Bosnia and Herzegovina. Yet this is a moment when the country must establish internal equilibrium founded on a constructive interdependence of all groups.

There is still a widely held view that compromise and consensus are a kind of weakness. We are striving to change this deeply ingrained attitude, an attitude not confined to Bosnia and Herzegovina alone. The talks now under way are part of a process through which the implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement is evolving into something broader and deeper.

This evolution — transcending the limitations of Dayton — is an incremental process, yet truly democratic in nature. It has again highlighted the evolutionary potential of Dayton. The very fact that the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina, an institution provided for in the Dayton Constitution, has triggered this process indicates that the Dayton system is indeed capable of reforming itself. Even well-intended statements from abroad risk jeopardizing this process which I view as "ownership in the making". I believe that the parties must be given every opportunity to produce "home-grown" solutions, arrived at by Bosnia and Herzegovina leaders for the benefit of the citizens of their country.

However, time is of the essence. The current constitutional discussions must produce a successful outcome within days, so that the necessary amendments can be made to the Entity constitutions and the Bosnia and Herzegovina Election Law within the time frame required to hold general elections on schedule in October of this year. These elections will be the first post-war polls organized by the domestic authorities and will introduce a four-year election cycle, which should further enhance the stability of the political system.

As the rule of law has begun to take hold, the number of returning refugees, throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, has increased dramatically. Last year, more than 92,000 so-called minority returns were recorded, a 36 per cent increase over the corresponding figure for the year 2000, which had been termed a "breakthrough" at the time by the United States-based non-governmental organization Human Rights Watch. If this rate is maintained — and I believe it can be maintained — mass return will be completed within two years. Here I would like to mention the crucial role of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in what I believe is a historic achievement, which just two years ago seemed extremely unlikely.

Since the end of 1997, more than 102,000 property claims have resulted in repossession — that is, 41 per cent of all such claims in all of Bosnia and Herzegovina. That rate will hit the 50 per cent mark shortly, thus meeting a key condition of the European Union road map.

I believe we can be proud that the corner has at last been turned, but this is not the time to relax our efforts. Adequate funding must be sustained until the return process has been completed.

The Srebrenica massacre left a legacy of war more bitter than any other. I welcome the United Nations recovery programme for Srebrenica, which aims to address the extraordinary social and economic problems there. It will underpin the efforts of the international community in the context of the Srebrenica Action Plan to facilitate returns to this area.

In 2000 and 2001 I issued decisions setting aside land for a cemetery and a memorial at Potocari near Srebrenica. A marker stone was formally installed at the site on the sixth anniversary of the massacre on 11 July 2001. The proposal made by the associations of the victims' families to add the nearby so-called Battery Factory site as a location for the memorial is being considered at the moment, and a site assessment of the property is being undertaken, funded by the United States Government. However, I continue to urge these associations to proceed without delay to plan for the burial of the remains that have been exhumed and prepared for interment.

Early in my mandate, I introduced the concept of "ownership", or "odgovornost" as they say in the local languages, to address the dependency syndrome of Bosnia and Herzegovina and to encourage the Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities at all levels to meet their responsibilities. Today, international peace implementation officials face a healthy amount of pride on the part of Bosnia and Herzegovina leaders, civic activists and citizens alike. I see this as proof that they have the genuine will to start owning problems and taking responsibility for their country's future.

With the Alliance for Change, a coalition of reform-oriented parties that displaced the nationalist establishment in government at the beginning of 2001, there are finally politicians leading the country who

support and defend Bosnia and Herzegovina's statehood. With assistance from the international community extended in a spirit of evolving partnership, they have, among other things, passed an election law and prepared Bosnia and Herzegovina for Council of Europe membership.

As the circumstances of peace implementation have considerably changed, the international community has adapted its engagement so as to meet new challenges in the most effective way. In the spring of 2001, I was asked by the Foreign Ministers of the European Union and the Contact Group to oversee the streamlining of international civil implementation structures in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Let me share with you key elements of the final streamlining plan.

The Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council (PIC), of course, remains the overall board of directors, the body to whom I report. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, there will be a cabinet-style body of international agency heads, chaired by the High Representative and responsible for cross-cutting policy development, supported by an inter-agency situation group. At the centre, there will be four task forces covering the core strategic areas of economic reform, refugee return, institution-building and the rule of law.

Finally, there will be a restructured field presence based on new joint areas of responsibility and the so-called co-location of all key agencies.

We have reached the final stage of peace implementation where more must be done with fewer resources, and everything must be prepared for a hand-over to the local authorities. This streamlined model will deliver a leaner, less bureaucratic, international community presence with reduced overall costs. It is being put into effect immediately.

In conclusion, Mr. President, let me inform you and the members of this body of my intention to leave my post at the end of May. This is my last presentation to you, but I will send a final report to the Secretary-General at that time.

I am convinced that Bosnia and Herzegovina can and will be a viable State if we continue to implement our overall plan with firmness and consistency. It is essential that we do not lose focus at this crucial stage. Forces bent on destruction and division are not yet completely defeated.

Yet, the contours of a stable and self-sustainable Bosnia and Herzegovina, based on the Dayton/Paris Accords and firmly on course to Europe, are at last coming into view. Bosnia and Herzegovina has normalized its relations with its neighbours and now speaks as an equal and respected member of the community of States in South-Eastern Europe. I am proud that I have played a part in bringing this about.

When I leave my post in May, Mr. President, I am confident that my distinguished successor and friend, Paddy Ashdown, with your continued support, will further build on the solid foundation we have put in place. He will have the opportunity to finally return Bosnia and Herzegovina to its rightful place — into the hands of its citizens.

Mr. Klein (*spoke in French*): Thirty-two months have passed since, at the request of the Secretary-General, I had the honour of accepting the leadership of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) — a mission that the Secretary-General himself originally set up. While it is true that the United Nations was not invited to Dayton, the fact remains that, at the end of 1995, the United Nations was the only organization able to deploy on the ground a major multinational police mission within a complex post-war environment.

The Secretary-General thus entrusted to me the responsibility of making a success of UNMIBH. Towards that end, he advised me to spell out clear-cut and specific mission goals, to prepare a plan and to implement it, as had been done with regard to the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium. Three months later, on the basis of an objective analysis of the mission status, I came before the Council to announce that the task to be carried out by the mission would take two to three years. With the Council's support, we set up the UNMIBH Mandate Implementation Plan — better known by the abbreviation "MIP" — which represented a pattern of guidelines based on six major programmes designed to reform, restructure and democratize the police forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

(*spoke in English*)

Today, I am pleased to report that UNMIBH is making strong progress towards completing its core mandate — on schedule and within its budget — by the end of this year. Our MIP Action Plan for 2002 was

finalized last month and is designed to be our performance plan and monitoring tool for the completion of our remaining projects by December 2002.

The Council will recall that our core task was to take 40,000 largely untrained police who were organized on a mono-ethnic war-time footing, and to turn them into professional, multi-ethnic police forces made up of less than half that number, each with human rights and professional training, working in accountable police structures and with a basic level of modern police equipment.

Our progress since the Secretary-General's most recent report in November 2001 has been steady. Allow me to outline just some of the highlights. With respect to police reform, in January we completed the two-year project of registration of all the 16,919 law enforcement officers currently exercising police powers in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We have begun to weed out those suspected of war crimes or other crimes, and those violating the property laws. Last year, for example, some 2,000 police officers regularized their housing at our insistence, and a further 3,000 are now being vetted.

All provisionally authorized police officers have undertaken compulsory training courses in human rights and many have received or are completing advanced professional training. In close cooperation with the Stabilization Force (SFOR), we have placed particular importance on improving local police capacity in crowd and riot control. In January, UNMIBH and the SFOR multinational support units conducted the first joint training of 100 members of local police support units. In total, some 800 police, in company-size formations, will receive such training this year.

In the core area of police restructuring, a comprehensive systems analysis of 21 police administrations began in January. The Brcko District Police Force that we established last year serves as our model for a democratic, multi-ethnic local police institution. Our goal is to accredit law enforcement agencies that meet this model. The expected completion of this project in September will coincide with the final certification of individual police officers.

Minority police representation has steadily increased. Through the two police academies that we established, over 1,050 minority police officers, including 365 women, have been recruited. Some 192 minority police have returned to their pre-war locations through our voluntary redeployment programme, and 85 former officers have been re-employed following refresher courses. We expect at least another 300 minority cadets this year, and more can be processed once the European Union (EU)-financed rebuilding of the police academies is completed.

Last month, I was delighted to oversee the official administrative and physical integration of the divided Mostar City Police. After six years of international effort, this is the first physically integrated administration at the cantonal and city level. It is a tangible precedent for all other cantonal and municipal institutions to follow.

Furthermore, we have now disbursed or committed all of the $16 million contributed by donors to the United Nations Trust Fund for the Police Assistance Programme for provision of basic equipment and facilities for the local police forces. In addition, the United Nations Trust Fund for the Restoration of Essential Public Services has supported 471 projects, costing over $17 million. This year we will complete the remaining 64 projects, at a cost of $4 million.

On institution-building, the State Border Service has made extraordinary progress. By the end of April, some 88 per cent of the border, and all airports, will be under State Border Service control. The effective operation of the State Border Service, together with the introduction of a partial visa regime and an airport landing card, resulted in a 66 per cent decrease in illegal migration through Sarajevo airport in 2001 — down from 24,000 to 8,000. This year we have witnessed even further reductions and an estimated 20 per cent increase in customs revenues.

Working with the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina, we expect the new State Information and Protection Agency (SIPA) to be established in the coming months. SIPA will be the first national organization responsible for the collection, analysis and distribution of data to other law enforcement agencies to improve the fight against international and inter-entity crime. We have also established the mechanisms for regional police cooperation through the regular ministerial-level meeting on police and the trilateral Regional Law Enforcement Agreement. Successful operations have been conducted in Bosnia

and Herzegovina and in Yugoslavia against arms smugglers and traffickers of women. The success of these joint operations has encouraged Hungary, Bulgaria and Slovenia to seek to join the Agreement.

We are continuing to aggressively combat human trafficking. In the past six months, under the STOP programme, special teams of international and local police have monitored 270 raids and interviewed 800 women and girls involved in prostitution. Since March 1999, some 410 trafficking victims have been assisted and repatriated to their home countries.

We are now focusing on prosecuting traffickers and brothel owners. With the assistance of our Criminal Justice Advisory Unit, over 50 criminal charges against traffickers have been brought. Sentences have ranged from 4 to 36 months imprisonment and substantial fines have been imposed. For the traffickers, the days of impunity are over.

I would also like to emphasize that we have investigated every single claim of alleged involvement by International Police Task Force (IPTF) members in trafficking. Despite media sensationalism, not one allegation has been substantiated and no additional information has been forthcoming. UNMIBH pursues a rigorous zero-tolerance policy. It is indeed disappointing that, despite our intensive efforts and the consistent, outstanding work being done by the IPTF officers, these unfounded rumours continue to circulate.

Turning now to Bosnia and Herzegovina's evolving engagement in the international arena, the second rotation of Bosnia and Herzegovina police officers to East Timor has been completed. The first nine-person contingent of United Nations Military Observers (UNMOs) is serving in Ethiopia and Eritrea; a second cadre of UNMOs has completed training and is about to deploy to the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and in the past three months, the Bosnia and Herzegovina Composite Transport Unit for United Nations peace operations has been trained and fully equipped and is ready to deploy this spring.

Those are just some of the milestones that make me confident that UNMIBH will achieve its core goals this year and hand over a successful operation to the EU Police Mission. They are not just abstract achievements. The bottom-line proof that police reform is working is that over 92,000 refugees and displaced persons returned to their homes last year, with very few security-related incidents. Two weeks ago, several hundred Bosniacs celebrated their Bajram at the site of the destroyed Ferhadija mosque in Banja Luka and in other previously difficult areas in the eastern Republika Srpska without incident.

But much remains to be done in the next 10 months, and some challenges go beyond the resources or authority of UNMIBH. First, there are some major projects that depend on additional funding. We are short by $3.5 million for capital and equipment costs to complete the State Border Service this year. About $1.5 million is required for the United Nations Trust Fund for Police Assistance to complete basic police equipment and facilities. And SIPA will require a mix of local and international funding for start-up costs. These shortfalls were the subject of two recent UNMIBH donor conferences.

Secondly, the political support of the High Representative has been and remains vital for the completion of police restructuring. Our Police Commissioner Project is fundamental to removing political interference from police structures. Most cantons and the Republika Srpska entity are on track, but we are facing determined obstruction in the Federation and in Canton Sarajevo from a political party that claims it wants to be a partner of the international community while it seeks to politicize and suborn the police forces.

We are now in a situation where, if we do not act, we risk jeopardizing success in the other cantons. Therefore, I have sought and received my colleague Ambassador Petritsch's commitment to helping us take all necessary measures to ensure the full implementation of the Police Commissioner Project.

Thirdly, I remain deeply concerned about the inability or unwillingness of the local judiciary to do its work. There is a grave imbalance in the rule of law, whereby police standards have vastly improved but the judicial system, as Ambassador Petritsch has said, remains dysfunctional. Arresting criminals is useless if they are freed by timorous or corrupt judicial officials a few hours later and then intimidate witnesses or threaten families of police officers.

Band-aid measures are not enough. As I stated last Thursday to the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council, immediate radical reform of the judiciary and prosecutors is key to everything the

international community is trying to achieve in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Finally, I ask for the Council's support for Srebrenica. While most of Bosnia and Herzegovina has progressed, Srebrenica remains a tragic symbol of underdevelopment and enduring hardship for displaced Serbs and Bosniac returnees alike. Eighteen months ago, the Secretary-General asked me whether the United Nations could play a special role in that desolate and tragic area. Step by step, through the multi-agency Srebrenica Action Plan, the United Nations Trust Fund and the opening of a model police station, we have reduced the level of insecurity. Returns have begun.

But, in essence, we have attended to the symptoms of post-conflict paralysis without treating the underlying causes. Towards this goal, we are working closely with experts of the United Nations Development Programme to establish a multi-year sustainable economic and social recovery plan for the wider area to facilitate two-way returns, recognizing the special circumstances and needs of families without men. A donors conference will take place in New York this spring. Srebrenica is one area that cannot be allowed to become, yet again, a victim, but this time a victim of compassion fatigue.

Allow me to conclude with some brief observations about other matters that will affect our mandate implementation.

We have actively participated in the streamlining exercise initiated and led by Ambassador Petritsch. A conclusion has been reached which the High Representative will now implement. Nonetheless, bringing all of the elements of the rule of law together in one task force is a positive initiative. As we have learned yet again, the elements of the rule of law are inseparable and can be achieved only through a holistic approach. In our remaining months, we look forward to participating in a revitalized effort in this entire arena.

But our biggest contribution to streamlining and local ownership will be to successfully complete our mandate and the smooth transition to a much smaller and more specialized mission. With this in mind and in accordance with the Secretary-General's instructions, UNMIBH has been equally open and helpful to both the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe technical missions that have produced reports on the expected international policing requirements beyond 2002. We are gratified that both these missions shared our assessment that around 480 highly skilled police monitors, plus civilian support, would be required to preserve UNMIBH's achievements while also coping with the inevitable crises of a country that remains politically fragile, with substantial unreconciled groups.

On the basis of our knowledge of UNMIBH and our experience elsewhere, we consider that there is sufficient time to fully plan and deploy the new European Union mission in a seamless transfer, providing that key pre-planning personnel begin work in March or April and that financial resources are made available to them to begin procurement of essential equipment and facilities.

Our downsizing and mission liquidation planning is well advanced. We intend to retain around 1,600 IPTF monitors until immediately after the October elections and then to downsize to around 600 IPTF in preparation for the transition to the European Union mission. However, even with a seamless transfer, the presence of SFOR will remain essential until there is full political stabilization and substantial progress in reconciliation. Of great importance to both these goals is the arrest of Karadzic and Mladic. In this respect, I fully support the recent robust actions of SFOR to find these two war criminals. I wish them better success at the earliest possible opportunity and full cooperation from the local authorities.

(*spoke in French*)

In conclusion, I wish to thank the members of the Council for their tireless support for UNMIBH and for having made their staff available to the Mission. It is their work that has made the Mission what it is today.

The successful completion of our mandate ends the peacekeeping phase of one of the largest police reform and restructuring operations that has ever been undertaken. We are on the verge, key in hand, of closing an operation that has established new conceptual and technical parameters for the development of a culture of competence and integrity for police forces within a structure and organization that is based on the principles of transparency and professionalism.

The termination of UNMIBH will also mark the end of a decade of United Nations involvement in peacekeeping in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this

connection, I am committed to completing the work of UNMIBH and of shutting it down with head held high. We must not forget, however, that, in the long run, our legacy will be in the hands of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the leaders they will elect in the forthcoming elections. I very much hope for a future in which the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina will make wise choices and succeed in securing their due place in Europe.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Spain, in his capacity as Presidency of the European Union, who will introduce Mr. Javier Solana, Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union and High Representative for the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy.

I invite the Permanent Representative of Spain to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Arias (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): The importance which the European Union ascribes to the issue under discussion today is underscored by the presence here of the High Representative for the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy, Mr. Javier Solana. I would request you, Sir, to grant him the opportunity to speak.

The President: I invite Mr. Javier Solana to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Solana: I should like to thank you, Sir, and all the members of the Security Council for this opportunity to speak here today.

It is very appropriate that we should devote time and attention to the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina today. There are so many issues and events competing for our attention in the Balkans that sometimes we risk neglecting all but the most immediate of crises. I welcome therefore the Presidency's initiative in organizing today's debate. Now is a crucial time for all of us — Bosnians and the international community alike — to reflect on our responsibilities and to commit ourselves to meeting them.

The human and political tragedy of the war that began 10 years ago is still a vivid memory for me personally and, I believe, for most Europeans. I have closely followed the events in Bosnia and Herzegovina in different capacities during that period of time.

Today I believe that Bosnia and Herzegovina is at a crossroads. Fundamental choices have to be made, and responsibilities assumed, by its people and by its politicians. On the one hand, Bosnia and Herzegovina could make a positive choice to make a determined effort rapidly to implement reforms and join the path that leads towards the European Union. Alternatively, the country could choose the path that will, I believe, lead to ever-greater isolation, to missed economic opportunities, and to a political wilderness where it will be left behind by more ambitious and more far-sighted neighbours.

Progress has no doubt been made during recent years. Indeed, a number of very important and significant achievements can be recalled: the adoption of important pieces of State-level legislation, an increase in minority returns and the steady strengthening of the country's institutions. All of these are very important steps forward, and constitute proof that real progress is possible given the political will.

That progress has been due in no small part to the outgoing High Representative, my friend Wolfgang Petritsch. I would like, on behalf of the European Union, to pay tribute to him, his skills and tenacity, and the encouraging progress he has made.

The European Union very much welcomes the fact that, last week in Brussels, the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board designated Lord Ashdown as successor to Wolfgang Petritsch. I look forward to the confirmation of his appointment by the Security Council. The new High Representative will inherit a situation where, despite the enormous progress to date, much more remains to be done. The European Union expects the authorities at all levels to cooperate fully with the new High Representative.

Let me add that, as has been mentioned before, there also needs to be decisive progress as regards the war crimes indictees. I am convinced that the painful chapter in Bosnia's history that began a decade ago will never be properly closed until justice is done, and is seen to be done. That means that all indictees must answer the charges made against them. State and entity Governments must therefore cooperate fully, in deed as well as in word, with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia.

The International Community must also meet its responsibilities. Here, the European Union is playing an increasingly important role: first, in terms of

financial assistance; secondly, in terms of providing a longer-term political perspective; and thirdly, in terms of a concrete contribution to peace and stability.

The European Union has provided, and will continue to provide, an important amount of financial assistance. In total, the European Union has provided more than 3 billion euros in financial assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina since 1991. This year alone the European Union is likely to contribute a further 200 million euros.

The European Union has provided Bosnia and Herzegovina and the wider region the prospect of eventual integration with the European Union. A new phase has begun, and a new perspective has been opened. While the Dayton Paris Accords were designed to guide the country away from war, the prospect of an eventual stabilization and association agreement offers a clear route towards a European future. But the pace of progress towards that European perspective is entirely in the hands of Bosnia and Herzegovina itself. One needs only to consider the relative progress of other States in the region to understand what I have just said. If a determined effort is not made soon by Sarajevo and Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina will be left behind.

The European Union is preparing to take on an important new responsibility as part of the international community. Let me take this opportunity to say a few words about the new European Union police mission, which will be ready to take over from the International Police Task Force (IPTF) on 1 January 2003. This is the first crisis-management operation undertaken by the European Union in the civilian crisis management field.

First, it will build on the remarkable achievements of the IPTF under the leadership of Jacques-Paul Klein and Mr. Coeurderoy. The mission will follow, but not replace, the IPTF. It will be a different mission, but it will draw extensively on IPTF's experience — and not least on Jacques Klein's help and advice — reflecting what the IPTF will have achieved by the end of the year and what else needs to be done in the coming year. It will also draw from the very good and important cooperation established on the ground with the Stabilization Force (SFOR).

The European Union police mission will seek to establish sustainable policing arrangements under Bosnia and Herzegovina ownership in accordance with best European and international practice, thereby raising current Bosnia and Herzegovina police standards. The European Union police mission, entrusted with the necessary authority to monitor, mentor and inspect, should achieve its goal by the end of 2005. Its strength would be around 480 police officers and 70 civilians, as has already been mentioned by Jacques Klein.

Our aim is a broad approach to the whole range of rule of law needs, including police activities. The European Union police mission, supported by the European Community's institution-building programmes, would therefore contribute to overall peace implementation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as to the achievement of the European Union's overall policy in the region, notably the stabilization and association process.

The Secretary-General has stressed on many occasions that a regional actor should assume the follow-on to the IPTF, to preserve what has been achieved and to continue monitoring and assistance. The rapid development of the European security and defence policy and the work done by European Union member States on capabilities, including on police capabilities, have made it possible for the European Union to assume that follow-on.

I very much welcome the fact that this very first mission of ours serves to emphasize at least two things: first, the openness of the European security and defence policy and, secondly, the willingness and ability of the European Union to work closely with the United Nations. We have decided to invite 20 countries to make offers of contributions to the European Union police mission. Moreover, the transition from the IPTF to the European Union police mission appears to me to be a concrete example of the kind of cooperation between the European Union and the United Nations that is now feasible, desirable and in line with the Brahimi recommendations. Both the European Union and the United Nations are aware of the need to establish practical arrangements to ensure a smooth and seamless transition between the IPTF and the European Union police mission.

The European security and defence policy strengthens the Union's contribution to international peace and security in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter. It also increases the range of instruments available to the international community

in response to crises. Given the many commitments that the United Nations is facing, the follow-on to the IPTF by the European Union will help the United Nations to allocate resources elsewhere. It will thus result not only in a demonstration of cooperation between the European Union and the United Nations in this area but also — and this is our shared hope — bring added value to the efforts of the United Nations in general.

A little more than 10 years ago it seemed inconceivable to many of us that a conflict as bitter and as brutal as that in Bosnia and Herzegovina would ever break out again in Europe. Many painful lessons have been learnt in the intervening period. Ten years after the war began, the European Union has proved its commitment to the future stability and prosperity of Bosnia and Herzegovina and of the wider region. We are absolutely determined to play our part in the establishment of peace, security and stability. We have offered the prospect of, and concrete assistance in, the progressive integration into European structures. But alone our commitment, our determination, our vision is not enough. We need from the Bosnian people and politicians a similar degree of commitment, determination and vision. It is time for us all to fulfil our responsibilities, and thus to allow Bosnia and Herzegovina to focus on the decade that lies ahead.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock (United Kingdom): Mr. Minister, it is a special honour to have you presiding over the Council this week to underline the importance of this discussion and of other aspects of our work. I also thank the Secretary-General for his presence here today and for his introductory statement, which set exactly the right tone for our discussion.

We have had three very interesting and important briefings from High Representative Petritsch, from Special Representative Klein and from the High Representative of the European Union. The United Kingdom fully subscribes to the approach of the European Union set out in Mr. Solana's presentation.

I should like to commend very warmly the dedicated and professional work of Special Representative Klein and High Representative Petritsch on peace implementation in Bosnia. Those efforts are really beginning now to bear fruit, marked not least by the forthcoming membership of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Council of Europe and also in the dramatic increase in refugee return.

As this is Ambassador Petritsch's last address to us in the Council, I should like to thank him very warmly for the work that he has done in Bosnia and Herzegovina at an extremely important time in the history of that new country. It is the United Kingdom's privilege to be providing his successor as High Representative, Lord Ashdown, and he has a hard act to follow.

Nevertheless, we all know that a great deal still has to be done. The year 2002 is a crucial one, with elections coming up in October. If our speakers this morning are answering questions later, I wonder if they could give us a slightly more detailed assessment of the security situation in the run-up to the October elections and the key challenges that still remain.

For instance, in spite of the success which Mr. Klein has recorded in Mostar, does the Croatian Democratic Community (HDZ) continue to pose a security challenge? It is important, against that background, that the International Police Task Force (IPTF) downsizing does not begin prematurely, and we hope that numbers and capabilities can be maintained until after the elections.

We were also glad to hear from Mr. Solana that there will be careful transition arrangements between the IPTF and the European Union police mission, and we hope that this will include the continuation in service of those European Union police officers who are serving with the IPTF at the end of the year.

Efforts to establish more firmly the rule of law in Bosnia have to be the top priority in the immediate term. This has a very direct impact on Bosnia's development and its credibility within the international community. Progress must encompass judicial and penal as well as police reform, for the reasons clearly set out by the Special Representative.

Economic reform also remains a serious concern. Recent progress in areas such as privatization, the creation of a single economic space and trade between the entities has been disappointing. This is stifling Bosnia's ability to attract international business interest, and it also affects unemployment — which is still far too high — and the immigration of younger people.

The fight against corruption and criminality has to be another priority. We welcome the steps that have been taken so far, but the authorities need to step up

their efforts to show both the international community and the Bosnian people that they are serious in these respects.

As the High Representative has said, there are no individuals in Bosnia and Herzegovina who are beyond the reach of the law. The United Kingdom warmly welcomes recent attempts to capture Mr. Karadzic. We attach great importance to the apprehension of all International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia indictees, and we are disappointed at the misguided criticism of these operations from the Republika Srpska. We regard the operations of the Stabilization Force (SFOR) as completely legitimate, because cooperation with The Hague Tribunal is key to Bosnia's integration into the international community. The arrest and transfer to The Hague of Karadzic and Mladic would signal a new page in Bosnia's development.

The implementation of the Dayton/Paris Peace Accord remains the overall goal. Dayton provides the constitutional and structural evolution. The High Representative's work on a structure to ensure civilian implementation is a good example of this. We continue to hope that the entities will be able to reach agreement on constitutional change, but, if not, the High Representative should be allowed to use his full powers to make the changes necessary to help realize the objective of a Bosnia and Herzegovina that is internally cohesive and fully democratic.

The President: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Tafrov (Bulgaria) (*spoke in French*): Allow me at the outset to thank you, Mr. Minister, for having graciously agreed to preside over the work of the Council this week. We are indeed privileged to have you here, and this demonstrates the importance that Norway attaches to its presidency of the Security Council for the month of March.

I should like also to thank the Secretary-General for his extremely important statement and also to thank the High Representative, Mr. Wolfgang Petritsch, as well as the Special Representative, Mr. Jacques Paul Klein, for their comprehensive briefings on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Bulgaria fully endorses the analysis and the conclusions offered by the High Representative for Foreign Policy and Common Security of the European Union, Mr. Javier Solana. I shall therefore confine myself to some brief national comments.

My country commends the work done by Mr. Petritsch as the High Representative for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina and agrees with the views set out and recommendations made in his report of 22 February of this year. In addition to warmly thanking Ambassador Petritsch for his outstanding work, my delegation also wishes to express its satisfaction at the decision taken by the Peace Implementation Council on 28 February to appoint Paddy Ashdown High Representative, as Mr. Petritsch's successor. My country is convinced that Lord Ashdown, who is known as a friend of Bosnia and Herzegovina, has all the credentials required actively to work with the international community as well as the local authorities.

Bulgaria has been supporting the Dayton/Paris Accord and the actions taken by the international community under that Accord, which is a decisive factor for bringing about peace in the former Yugoslavia and for bringing about a united, multi-ethnic and democratic Bosnia and Herzegovina.

My country agrees with the ideas and conclusions contained in the report on the need to pursue the efforts of the international community in Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to ensure the full implementation of the Dayton/Paris Accord.

At the same time, it is our view that this involvement should gradually decline, with local authorities progressively taking over all these responsibilities. That would enable Bosnia and Herzegovina to become a completely autonomous State that can take its proper place within the structures of international integration. Here, we hail the members of the Election Commission for their work to prepare for the general elections scheduled for 5 October, which will be first organized by the domestic authorities. It is important that the Bosnian authorities be fully involved in the lead-up to the elections, which will be a sign of the ability of Bosnia and Herzegovina further to align itself with the structures of European integration.

We appeal to the authorities to implement the four decisions handed down in 2000 by the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially that relating to the electorate, which will make possible equitable representation of the entire

constituency in the establishment of the State and will facilitate integration into European bodies. Implementation of that decision will enable the general elections to go forward properly and will signal the ability of Bosnia and Herzegovina to become an active member of the Council of Europe. I recall that Bulgaria fully supports such membership.

My country supports the international community in its strategy of gradually transferring United Nations responsibilities to the European Union. We welcome the decision of the European Union to name the next High Representative as a special representative of the European Union. Here, Bulgaria endorses the European Union strategy for a seamless transition from the International Police Task Force to a European Union police mission. My country believes that the Bosnia and Herzegovina peace process has reached the point where its European dimension should be emphasized, because of the fact that Bosnia and Herzegovina naturally belongs to Europe and because of Bosnia's European inclination.

At the same time, we believe that the issue of the possible participation of countries not members of the European Union in the follow-on police mission to replace the International Police Task Force should be decided in the future, taking account of the contribution that such participants had already made, along with their interest and their capacity to continue their participation.

The High Representative's plan for reorganizing the United Nations international presence, which envisions the rationalization and improved coordination of the work of international civilian organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, deserves the Security Council's support. The functions, structures, composition and financing of that presence should accord with the political situation on the ground.

Bulgaria welcomes the commitment of the Bosnian authorities to the fight against terrorism, including through their participation in the recently established coordination team. The measures taken by the competent authorities of the Federation with respect to persons suspected of terrorist activities are one example of that commitment.

We welcome the increased number of refugees who returned in 2001; this issue is directly linked to revitalizing the country's economy. Among the positive trends of recent months, we should also mention progress towards normalizing relations between Bosnia and Herzegovina and its neighbours the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Croatia.

At the same time, Bulgaria is convinced of the need for more active and more dynamic cooperation on the part of the Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. The appearance of Mr. Karadzic and Mr. Mladic before the Tribunal could only improve the overall climate in the country.

Bulgaria praises the High Representative for his efforts to promote dialogue among the three main religious groups, which have included the rebuilding of religious monuments that had been destroyed. We call on the parties in Bosnia to make greater efforts to that end. Demining must be speeded up; there is an obvious need for a comprehensive demining strategy, to be implemented under the control of the Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities.

In conclusion, I hail the activities of non-governmental organizations operating in Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially those working in the field of human rights.

The President: I thank the representative of Bulgaria for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Cunningham (United States of America): I too wish to welcome you, Mr. Minister, to today's meeting; we are very appreciative of your having devoted the time to be with us this week.

We have heard some truly interesting comments and briefings from our guests this morning. Today's discussion reflects the challenge that the international community faces in balancing its role in Bosnia and Herzegovina with the responsibility and commitment required by the leaders and the citizens of Bosnia. The streamlining plan approved last week at Brussels by the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council is timely and indeed necessary for the next phase of the implementation of the Dayton Peace Accords. We welcome the success in producing what Ambassador Petritsch described as a leaner and less bureaucratic structure. We also welcome the decision of the Council to accept the offer of the European Union to continue the efforts of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) in strengthening the rule of law.

We congratulate Mr. Klein on his success with the International Police Task Force. We applaud his efforts to attain the goal of completing UNMIBH's core mandate by the end of this year; thanks in large part to his efforts, the way ahead on police and justice is clear, if not exactly easy, on the path provided and with the envisaged cooperation between the European Union and the United Nations.

But neither the streamlining exercise nor international assistance alter the central role that Bosnia's leaders and its people must play in implementing the Dayton Peace Accords and in building a prosperous and secure nation. We know the priorities; they are the strengthening of State institutions, refugee returns and economic reform. We still see too little progress on the part of Bosnia's Government towards making the hard choices and towards reaching compromise on the most critical issues. Simply put, more has to be done on the Constitutional Court decision, the upcoming elections and the current budget, as well as on defence and judicial reform.

A key point has to be kept in mind for the future, and that is that economic growth will not be sustainable until investors are assured that the Government can address these and other problems on its own. We urge the Government to take the necessary steps to implement the Constitutional Court's decision and to agree on a budget that provides sufficient funds for the upcoming elections, for the State Border Service and for reform of the armed forces, among other things.

In our view, the upcoming elections are not premature, but they will require considerable effort and commitment on the part of Bosnia's leaders and its people.

My Government remains committed to Dayton's implementation. We actively support the Peace Implementation Council on the civilian side, as well as SFOR's considerable role, including its efforts to apprehend indicted war criminals still at large, as we saw last week in the two SFOR operations. The United States is committed to seeing those responsible for violations of international humanitarian law, genocide and war crimes, including Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic, brought to The Hague. We seek and expect the cooperation of regional Governments in the arrest of indicted war criminals and their transfer to The Hague, and we urge Republika Srpska to fulfil its obligations under the Dayton Accords to turn over indicted war criminals.

I want to conclude by congratulating Ambassador Petritsch, who is with us for the last time, on his effort and commitment to peace over two and a half years. Last week, the Peace Implementation Council said in its statement that as a result of his efforts, Bosnia and Herzegovina is substantially more stable, more democratic and closer to Europe. That is testimony to his efforts and an excellent record to leave to his successor. As others have noted, there is still a lot to do. We welcome the designation of Lord Ashdown and look forward to working closely with him to carry on the implementation of the Dayton Accords.

The President: I thank the representative of the United States for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Wehbe (Syrian Arab Republic) *(spoke in Arabic)*: My delegation is pleased to see you, Sir, presiding over this important meeting of the Security Council. This is clear proof of the great importance that Norway attaches to the question of the development of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I would like to express our appreciation to Mr. Kofi Annan, the Secretary-General, for his lucid statement, which provided a framework for our debate today. We also thank him for the report that he presented to us.

In addition, our thanks go to Mr. Wolfgang Petritsch, High Representative for the implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina. We also express our appreciation to Mr. Jacques Paul Klein, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his detailed briefing on the achievements of the United Nations in that country. I cannot but welcome the decision of the European Union to appoint Lord Ashdown as successor to Mr. Petritsch. We wish him every success in his task of achieving peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We would also like to express our deep appreciation to Mr. Javier Solana, Secretary-General of the Council and High Representative of the European Union Common Foreign and Security Policy, for his efforts to achieve peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

My delegation welcomes the meeting of the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council on 6 December 2001. At that meeting the Board

adopted a draft plan, presented by the High Representative, on streamlining the work of the international civilian organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It coordinates policies in the fields of the rule of law, the building of economic institutions, the return of refugees, and reconstruction.

We thank the High Representative for his efforts aimed at the return of refugees and internally displaced persons. The year 2001 witnessed more than 92,000 returns of minorities to the country. This fact will have a clear effect on the social, economic and political stability of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We look forward to the general elections to be held in October this year. We join the High Representative's call to the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina to accelerate the preparations for these elections. Their success will have a major effect on the political, economic and social life in Bosnia and Herzegovina, enabling the political administration to assume its responsibilities after the end of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH), on 31 December 2002.

In this regard, there is an urgent need for the reform and strengthening of the defence forces and the army in order for Bosnia and Herzegovina to be able to discharge its security and defence duties after the full transfer of power to the Government at the end of this year. There is also a need to streamline the international civilian presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as a need to study the High Representative's plan for the partnership between the international community and the Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities in various fields.

A cause for concern is the pace of economic recovery in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which continues to be extremely slow. This could cast shadows on the overall development process in the country. However, Bosnia and Herzegovina's endeavour to join the European Union could represent a political and economic objective that can be achieved through the implementation of the plan provided by the European Union. I agree completely with Mr. Petritsch's statement a few moments ago that the leaders of Bosnia and Herzegovina have the responsibility to develop their Government and administration by themselves, in a manner consistent with the reality prevailing there. In my opinion, this is the inevitable result of the process.

We welcome Bosnia and Herzegovina's normalization of its relations with neighbouring countries, in particular its exchange of ambassadors with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. It is our hope that an appropriate solution to the question of the border between the two countries will be found. The 1999 Treaty on the State Border must be fully applied along the whole border. This would undoubtedly facilitate the rapprochement between Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the European Union in the Stabilization and Association Process.

The President: I thank the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Levitte (France) *(spoke in French):* It is an honour to have you, Sir, presiding over our meeting today, and I would like to express our gratitude.

The Secretary-General set the tone for our meeting with his clear and realistic statement. France is particularly pleased at the joint participation in our meeting of the High Representative, Mr. Wolfgang Petritsch; the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Jacques Paul Klein; and the High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union, Mr. Javier Solana. This event has great symbolic importance and underlines the exemplary cooperation developing on the ground between the United Nations and the European Union.

A major restructuring of the international presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina will happen soon. The last meeting of the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Conference, which was held on 28 February, took a very clear position in this regard. Mr. Petritsch, Mr. Klein and Mr. Solana are involved directly in the restructuring and will continue to play a decisive part together in the coming months.

As Mr. Petritsch recalled, the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina still requires the constant attention of the international community. The momentum of reform must be maintained, and work to implement the Dayton Agreements must be broadened. Continuing this process, begun a year ago by the Government of Mr. Zlatko Lagumdzija, will require courage, determination and perseverance. Once completed, it will open up the door for Bosnia and Herzegovina to join Europe. The imminent admission of Bosnia and

Herzegovina to the Council of Europe will be an initial stage.

On the matter of priority tasks, ensuring development in the country is an essential goal. To that end, it is essential to improve investor confidence in the safety of the economic environment. In that light, promoting the rule of law, combating corruption and impunity and strengthening the independence and credibility of the judicial system are tasks that must be at the heart of public action. This requires, inter alia, full respect for jurisdictional decisions, beginning with decisions taken by the Constitutional Court. All members of the executive power that are involved in this matter at the State level, in the Federation and in the Republika Srpska, have the responsibility to ensure compliance.

It is equally advisable to arrest the indicted persons and refer them to the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, beginning with Karadzic and Mladic. France actively supports the action of the Stabilization Force (SFOR) on the ground in this connection. We would urge all responsible officials in Bosnia and Herzegovina to unreservedly lend their cooperation to this action.

The international community must be prepared to support the Bosnian authorities in the best possible way to carry out the needed reforms. The restructuring agreed last week by the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council (PIC) will certainly be helpful. Actually implementing the PIC's conclusions must begin without delay. We would like to thank Mr. Petritsch and his deputy, Mr. Hays, for the work they have accomplished over more than a year to encourage this to happen. The international civilian presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina will be more compact, more coherent, and thereby more effective.

On the subject of restructuring, I would like to comment on the future of the International Police Task Force (IPTF) of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH). At our meeting on 5 December with Mr. Klein, I stressed that, as far as France is concerned, UNMIBH is an exemplary peacekeeping operation, with an exit strategy, ready to hand over at the end of 2002 to a regional organization that is to follow on with some of its functions. In this particular case, the organization involved at the meeting was the European Union, and the offer it made through the Ministers of Foreign Affairs meeting in Brussels on 18 February was unanimously accepted by the PIC Steering Board. I was delighted that the European Union was thus in the forefront of institutions actually carrying out the Secretary-General's ideas on how to develop coordination and complementarity between the United Nations and regional organizations. As Mr. Solana said, in coming months the United Nations and the European Union will be cooperating closely to ensure a seamless transition from UNMIBH to the European Union Police Mission (EUPM).

Within the context of restructuring the international civilian presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the European Union will strengthen its role overall in the area of the rule of law, particularly in helping to strengthen the judicial system. This should result in better assimilation of European norms and requirements in the country.

Mr. Petritsch, Mr. Klein and Mr. Solana have told us what the international community has been able to achieve in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Since Mr. Petritsch comes to the end of his term in a few months, I would like to extend to him our deep gratitude for the success he has been able to achieve. Mr. Paddy Ashdown, who will succeed him as High Representative, will, of course, be able to count on solid support from France as he continues in the work of implementation the Dayton Accords. I would like to extend our best wishes to Mr. Jacques Paul Klein for his excellent and timely implementation of the UNMIBH mandate to date.

The President: I would like to thank the representative of France for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Diallo (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): My delegation welcomes your presence here today with us. We would like to thank you for organizing this meeting, just at the time that your country is taking over the presidency of our Council. I assure you of our full cooperation. Allow me to take this opportunity to extend our thanks to Mr. Adolfo Aguilar Zinser for the able manner in which he guided the work of the Council in February.

Mr. President, I would also like, through you, to welcome Mr. Wolfgang Petritsch, High Representative for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina; Mr. Jacques Paul Klein, Special Representative of the Secretary-General; and Mr. Javier Solana, Secretary-General of the Council

and High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union. Their statements have certainly given us further information about the processes under way in Bosnia and Herzegovina. I would like to reiterate my delegation's support for the efforts being made by all those involved in the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Following consideration of the Secretary-General's report on the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) on 5 December 2001, the Council assessed the slow but steady progress being made on the ground. It regretted difficulties facing the Mission and expressed its resolve to continue supporting it. Now would seem the right time to reflect altogether on follow-on action for UNMIBH. Here we have to think about the spirit of Mr. Klein's words when he said that Bosnia is a test for us and that to abandon a multi-ethnic Bosnia would sound the death knell for all States in the Balkans.

It is undeniable that progress has been made by UNMIBH after six years of major commitment on the ground. Now comes the question of an exit strategy. Here, the role of regional organizations, particularly the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the European Union, can offer significant support. It would be desirable not just to work on an exit strategy, but rather to develop a genuine strategy to ensure that the country can fully join the international community and European institutions and structures.

The information given to us by Mr. Solana, Mr. Klein and Mr. Petritsch show that the European Union is indeed resolved to take over from UNMIBH. My delegation welcomes the conclusions of the General Affairs Council of the European Union on 18 February 2002 and those of the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council of 28 February 2002. We welcome the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board's acceptance of the European Union offer to provide a police mission, beginning 1 January 2003, to take over and continue the work done by UNMIBH. We welcome the appointment by the Steering Board of Lord Paddy Ashdown as High Representative to replace Mr. Wolfgang Petritsch, who has done an outstanding job.

My delegation would like to pay tribute to the electoral commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the work done in preparing for the first general elections, to be held on 5 October 2002. We appeal to the leaders of the political parties to ensure that citizens are able to do their civic duty and exercise all their rights. The commitment of the political leaders, the participation of the people and the support of the international community are all essential in this regard.

The task force initiative referred to by the High Representative merits our consideration.

My delegation has taken note of the information contained in the twenty-first report of the High Representative on the activities carried out from 26 August 2001 to 19 February 2002, within the context of implementing the Peace Agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Those activities are extremely important.

In conclusion, I would like to stress the need to prepare a coherent strategy based on the restoration and consolidation of peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. My delegation encourages coordination among the activities of UNMIBH, the European Union and the High Representative with a view to ensuring a seamless transition from the International Police Task Force to the European Union Police Mission. We believe that those efforts can be supplemented by the harmonization of the activities of the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, as well as of other actors.

The President: I thank the representative of Guinea for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): First of all, I would like to join others in welcoming you, Sir, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Norway, to this very important meeting of the Security Council today. We are also grateful to Mr. Petritsch, Mr. Klein and Mr. Solana for their assessments of the current situation in Bosnia.

The Russian Federation believes that ensuring stability in Bosnia overall, and in each of its entities, is the main condition for further successful progress in the peace process, on the basis of the Peace Agreement, whose potential is far from exhausted.

We support the efforts of the High Representative with a view to restructuring the international presence and, in particular, the plan of action that he has prepared. We believe that all activities in Bosnia, including the proposed reorganization of the international forces there, should be aimed at

strengthening Bosnia and Herzegovina as a single, stable and independent State.

We have often emphasized that a solid foundation for Bosnian statehood can be laid only through the careful search by the Bosnian parties themselves for mutually acceptable solutions. To that end, the representatives of both entities must demonstrate greater willingness to cooperate, make compromises and find the strength within themselves to rise above narrow ethnic interests so as to achieve common Bosnian goals. Only thus will it be possible to ensure State structures and organs of authority that function normally at all levels, as well as an effective legislature and a single economic space. Progress in that direction will allow for conditions that will ensure stability and democracy for the political forces in the country, as well as economic, social and cultural development and integration into the European structures.

In that context, the question of constitutional reform is a priority. A decision in that respect must be taken by the sides themselves. Any other approach would necessarily lead to negative consequences for stability within the country, particularly on the eve of the Bosnian-wide elections, and would strengthen the position of nationalist parties in both entities. In this regard, it is necessary to be extremely cautious; the imposition on the Bosnians of any solution to this very significant problem by decree of the High Representative could, indeed, be counter-productive.

Another important aspect of strengthening the positive trends in Bosnia and Herzegovina is the overall regional situation. We believe that a solid, positive dynamic in the development of Yugoslav-Bosnian and Croatian-Bosnian relations is extremely important for the further stabilization of the Balkans. In this respect, new opportunities are opening up as a result of the recent signing between Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia of a bilateral agreement on free trade, the exchange of ambassadors between those two countries and the resumption of the work of the inter-State diplomatic commission on border issues of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia.

Those steps, geared towards establishing mechanisms for resolving specific problems that have built up in the relationship between Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, are laying the foundations for solid, good-neighbourly relations. The achievement of that goal is also being assisted by the efforts of the High Representative to step up the process of the return, to the places where they used to live, of refugees and internally displaced persons from national minorities. Unless that problem is resolved, we can hardly talk about achieving real political stability in the country.

We share the concern about reports of the presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina of terrorist bases for organizations of the Bin Laden and Al-Qaeda type. We believe it important to take all necessary measures in order to eliminate from Bosnia and Herzegovina any environment conducive to extremists and extreme nationalists.

With regard to the work of the Stabilization Force (SFOR) and the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, such activities must be carried out strictly in accordance with the mandate that the Security Council gave SFOR; there must be no violations of that mandate, including the methods of cooperation with the Tribunal.

There is another matter relating to security in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We must stress once again that attempts to establish a single army would run counter not only to the Peace Agreement but to the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which states that defence matters are within the purview of the entities. Any effort to rush that process through would be counter-productive, and could disrupt the rather fragile balance of political stability that has begun to build up in the last few years between the Serbs one the one hand and the Bosniacs and Croats on the other.

We support the outcome of the Brussels meeting of the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board, held on 28 February, including that part relating to the transfer to the European Union, on 1 January next year, of the functions of the management of the international police operation. It is important that we achieve a seamless agreed transition of the operation to the new format and ensure that the United Nations International Police Task Force (IPTF) is duly and properly replaced by the European Union Police Mission, with, of course, the appropriate authorization by the Security Council. In this regard, we must remember that the work of the new Police Mission will not begin from scratch, as many of the tasks facing the IPTF have already been discharged, or will have been completed by the end of

2002. The issue, moreover, concerns the transfer of authority to the new mission and not a review of the United Nations operation's existing mandate, which is based on the Dayton Agreements.

The Russian Federation intends to continue providing multifaceted support for the development of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a single multi-ethnic State consisting of two fully equal entities — the Republika Srpska and the Federation — and will make a constructive contribution to resolving any problems remaining in the Bosnian settlement.

The President: I thank the representative of the Russian Federation for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Yap (Singapore): At the outset, we would like to express how honoured we are to see you, Sir, in the chair for today's public meeting on Bosnia and Herzegovina. Your chairing of the meeting clearly shows the importance that Norway attaches to the issue.

We are also honoured by the personal participation of the Secretary-General and thank him for his important statement.

We would like to welcome Mr. Wolfgang Petritsch, Mr. Jacques Paul Klein and Mr. Javier Solana to the Council and thank them for their useful briefings. What they have told us today gives room for optimism as the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina moves forward on various fronts. We are certainly pleased that there has been further progress in bringing greater stability to the country and integrating it with Europe. Preparations for the first general elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina under local responsibility, scheduled for 5 October this year, have made progress. Police restructuring and reform have made much headway. Last year saw an increase of 36 per cent in minority returns over those in 2000, and Bosnia and Herzegovina moved one step closer to joining the Council of Europe when the Council's Political Affairs Committee voted overwhelmingly in favour of the State's membership.

At the same time, however, we are concerned about the slow progress in a number of crucial areas. The Republika Srpska authorities have not advanced much the process of reconciliation among the three constituent peoples. Although the Republika Srpska passed a law on cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic remain at large because of the Republic's refusal to help arrest them. Judicial reform is still wanting and, in the economic area, the pace of reform continues to be sluggish.

Hence, while there is light shining through, dark clouds still hover over Bosnia and Herzegovina. The situation in the territory is far from being fully stabilized, which is clearly evident from there not being one single army. In the public meeting on Bosnia and Herzegovina six months ago, we noted Ambassador Kolby's remark that progress in the country was incremental and not fundamental. This, unfortunately, still holds true. As we also stated then, the underlying causes of the slow process of change for the better must be addressed. We hope that, with the efforts being made by all those involved, faster progress will be made at the fundamental level.

We are therefore encouraged that concerted efforts have been made to streamline the international civilian implementation efforts in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We note that the Task Force Model endorsed by the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council at its meeting on 28 February 2002 would raise the efficiency and effectiveness of the international presence and strengthen the role of the High Representative. The four Task Forces on the rule of law, institution building, economic policy, and return and reconciliation, under a cabinet of lead agencies chaired by the High Representative, provide the necessary focuses for tackling the underlying causes of the slow progress in the various aspects of Bosnia and Herzegovina. With the state authorities aptly integrated into these structures, we look forward to closer coordination and greater improvements in the country's situation. Ultimately, it is the parties involved in the problem that must take ownership. We encourage the parties to maintain their sights on Bosnia and Herzegovina's joining the European Union (EU) and to use it as a motivating force to pursue an all-inclusive, multi-ethnic society in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We welcome the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board's acceptance of the EU offer of an EU Police Mission to take over from the International Police Task Force (IPTF) when the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) expires at the end of this year. An early decision would certainly facilitate a smooth transition from the IPTF to the EU Police Mission. We urge UNMIBH, the EU and the High Representative to

make maximum use of the time available to ensure this. A seamless transition would bring to a fine conclusion the clear and well-planned exit strategy that has been established for UNMIBH. We again congratulate Mr. Klein and UNMIBH on their farsightedness in laying out a proper exit strategy that ensures that the rule of law will continue to be enhanced even when the United Nations leaves the scene. It is clear that, while there is no longer active conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the situation there has not reached the level of security and stability that would allow external security presences to leave the territory. As much as the EU Police Mission is required, the Stabilization Force (SFOR) also has to remain in the country when UNMIBH winds down.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is fortunate to have the support of the EU, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. However, these organizations, too, cannot maintain their presence indefinitely. We note the EU's direction that the EU Police Mission should achieve its goals by the end of 2005. We also understand that there are pressures on SFOR to downsize. The onus is therefore on the leaders and people of Bosnia and Herzegovina to attain the fundamental progress needed to establish a fully viable State integrated with Europe.

Before I conclude, allow me to convey our appreciation and commendation to Mr. Petritsch for his commitment and efforts in advancing the peace process and improving the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In difficult circumstances, Mr. Petritsch has achieved substantial results during his term as High Representative. We would also like to join our colleagues in congratulating Lord Ashdown on being designated to take over as High Representative when Mr. Petritsch steps down from the post. As with Mr. Petritsch, we will give him our full support as he takes on this demanding and challenging assignment.

The President: I thank the representative of Singapore for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Corr (Ireland): May I, on behalf of my delegation, join others in warmly welcoming you here today, Sir, at the beginning of Norway's presidency of the Security Council. I would like to assure the Norwegian presidency of Ireland's full support over the coming month. I would like also to take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Aguilar Zinser of Mexico for his excellent presidency during the month of February.

Ireland would also like to thank the Secretary-General, High Representative Petritsch and Special Representative Klein for their comprehensive statements this morning. Ireland fully endorses the statement which High Representative Solana delivered on behalf of the European Union. I will therefore make only some brief comments in my national capacity.

My delegation would first like to warmly commend High Representative Petritsch for his outstanding contribution to the implementation of the peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina. We wish him an equally successful final few months as High Representative. We thank him also for the most recent report of his activities regarding the implementation of the peace Agreement.

Ireland welcomes the appointment of Lord Ashdown as Mr. Petritsch's successor as High Representative and we look forward to his further designation as European Union (EU) special representative in Bosnia. Lord Ashdown can count on Ireland's full support as he prepares to take up his mandate.

High Representative Solana has outlined in detail the European Union's decision to ensure the follow-on to the United Nations International Police Task Force (IPTF) as of 1 January 2003, as agreed at the meeting of the European Union's General Affairs Council on 18 February. Ireland welcomes the acceptance of the European Union's decision by the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council, on 28 February. Ireland also welcomes the strong statement of support that the Security Council intends to give to the European Union's decision on ensuring the follow-on Police Mission in the draft resolution that is due for adoption later today.

The proposed European Union Police Mission, or EUPM, will be the first mission mounted by the European Union under the rubric of European security and defence policy. Therefore, for those of us in the European Union and beyond, this is an important development, substantively and symbolically, and one that my delegation greatly welcomes.

The EUPM is designed to be an element in the European Union's broader strategy in Bosnia and Herzegovina, to cover the whole range of rule of law

questions as well as institution-building programmes. The EUPM will contribute to the overall goals of peace implementation as outlined by High Representative Petritsch.

We look forward to the cooperation of all the relevant authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina as the transition phase approaches, and we once again urge those authorities to work with High Representative Petritsch and with the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) to ensure the full implementation of the Dayton/Paris Peace Accords and the development, as we have heard emphasized this morning, of viable State institutions.

It is also right today to warmly thank Special Representative Klein and all those in UNMIBH, including in particular the International Police Task Force (IPTF), for their achievements to date in restructuring and reforming the law enforcement agencies in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Ireland welcomes the appointment by High Representative Petritsch of the members of the Electoral Commission as part of preparations for the first general elections, to be held in October 2002. It is essential that the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina be able to exercise their democratic rights without hindrance, and we fully support the work of the Electoral Commission.

We also welcome the current discussions between political leaders in Bosnia and Herzegovina to come to an agreement regarding the Constituent Peoples Decision. It is clear that agreement on the implementation of this and other decisions of the Constitutional Court must come from the political leaders in Bosnia and Herzegovina itself, so as to underline the readiness of the country to be admitted to the Council of Europe. It is important that they address this task urgently.

Failure to reach rapid agreement on that issue will have serious consequences for the holding of elections in October, as well as for Bosnia's integration into European structures. We hope that satisfactory resolution of this issue, as well as enhanced cooperation with Bosnia and Herzegovina's neighbours, can set the country on a road that leads towards integration with the European Union. This itself is in the hands of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Ireland fully supports recent decisions on the streamlining of the international presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina based on the task-force model that has been introduced by High Representative Petritsch, and especially the extensive consultation process that has been undertaken with all peace implementation agencies as well as with the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We look forward to the early implementation of the process, and welcome the strengthened effectiveness of the international presence that will be achieved under that model.

In conclusion, we have many challenges ahead that will require vigour and determination by the people of Bosnia: the forthcoming elections, strengthening civil society, addressing the issue of reconciliation, developing a strategy for domestic war crimes prosecutions, the full implementation of the decisions of the human rights chamber, and respect for social, economic and gender rights. We have come a long way on many of these issues, for which my delegation would like to warmly thank Mr. Petritsch and Mr. Klein. We greatly appreciate what they have done in the recent period.

The President: I thank the representative of Ireland for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Gokool (Mauritius): Allow me, first of all, to heartily congratulate Mexico for a successful presidency during the month of February. Let me also congratulate Norway on its assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month. I also extend to you, Mr. President, our congratulations on presiding over this meeting. My delegations extends its full support and cooperation to you and your delegation.

We are pleased to have in our midst at today's meeting Mr. Javier Solana, Secretary-General of the Council and High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union. I also wish to join other speakers in thanking Mr. Petritsch and Mr. Klein for their comprehensive briefings on developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We have taken note of the important progress achieved since the last briefing given to the Council.

The relentless efforts put forth by Mr. Petritsch and his team in the implementation of the Dayton Agreement have brought about promising results in the overall development of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We warmly welcome and congratulate Mr. Petritsch for the excellent manner in which he conducted his duties as

the High Representative for two and a half years. As he decides to retire from his noble post, we wish him plenty of success in his future endeavours.

I would also like to take this opportunity to extend our best wishes to Lord Ashdown, who has been appointed by the European Union as the successor to Mr. Petritsch. We also congratulate Mr. Klein for planning a clear-cut exit strategy from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

As the European Union prepares to take Bosnia and Herzegovina into its fold, my delegation considers it appropriate at this stage that the European Union takes over United Nations police training and monitoring duties at the expiry of the latter's mandate, in December 2002. However, all necessary precautions should be taken to preserve the achievements of the United Nations International Police Task Force mission (IPTF), as well the existing levels of institutional and personnel proficiency.

In that regard, we encourage all parties concerned — the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH), the European Union and the High Representative — to collaborate closely to ensure a seamless transition of responsibilities from the IPTF to the European Union Police Mission. Here, I wish to echo the good words that we have just heard from the Secretary-General about the laudable works performed by UNMIBH.

My delegation believes in the continued involvement of the international community in Bosnia and Herzegovina to help build a politically and economically sustainable State that will fully integrate into Europe, and in enabling it to meet its international and regional obligations. The report before us highlights the complexities that exist in the re-shaping of the international community presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In that respect, we note with satisfaction the streamlining exercise envisaged by the High Representative to avoid duplication in the work of numerous international agencies. That exercise will certainly help bring about more interaction in a coordinated and complementary manner, for maximum benefit for Bosnia and Herzegovina. We welcome the importance of the role of the High Representative in guiding and coordinating the activities of civilian organizations and agencies involved in assisting the parties to implement the Peace Agreement.

The elections in October 2002 are approaching. It is in the best interest of local leaders to hold a dialogue aimed at finding a compromise solution. Political leaders should think of ways to move their country further away from the war and towards closer integration with the European Union. Bosnia and Herzegovina still has a long way to go to fulfil the conditions on the European Union road map. It is therefore imperative that efforts are stepped up at the local level to complete the outstanding points on the list so that the benefits of being a member of the European Union may be enjoyed. Given the developments on the ground, it is high time that the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina take their destiny into their own hands.

The President: I thank the representative of Mauritius for the kind words he addressed to me.

Ms. Lajous (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Before I begin my statement, I should like to welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Norway, Mr. Jan Petersen, and to express once again to him my country's support for the Norwegian presidency of the Security Council. Mexico is confident that Norway's enlightened and committed foreign policy will successfully guide the work of this body. I also thank you, Mr. Minister, for your words of tribute to Mexico's presidency of the Security Council during the month of February.

Mexico would like also to join those delegations that have praised the work done by Mr. Wolfgang Petritsch as High Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We also welcome Lord Ashdown, who shortly will assume the office of High Representative. In our view, the work of the High Representative is vital in coordinating the efforts of the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina with those of the international community. Mexico therefore thanks Mr. Petritsch for his efforts and dedication.

For a number of years now, Mexico has been following with particular attention the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and has reviewed with interest the conclusions of the Peace Implementation Council with regard to a follow-up to the International Police Task Force and to the coordination of international efforts.

We look forward with interest to the holding of general elections on 5 October this year. We encourage the political leaders of the country to reach agreement

by the middle of this month on the enactment of the Constituent Peoples' Decision. We take note of the acceptance by the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council of the European Union's offer to provide a police mission, starting 1 January 2003, which would replace the International Police Task Force.

In supporting the draft resolution before us, Mexico appeals to the principal political actors in Bosnia and Herzegovina to come up with solutions that would be inclusive of minorities, democratic and respectful of human rights, in order to lay the groundwork for a future of harmonious coexistence.

The President: I thank the representative of Mexico for the kind words she addressed to me.

Mr. Belinga-Eboutou (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, Cameroon is extremely pleased to see Norway presiding over the Council this month, and we appreciate in particular your having convened this meeting on Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Today the Council is considering the report of the High Representative for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina. This consideration is of particular importance, for it is clear that this is a pivotal moment for Bosnia and Herzegovina. On 5 October 2002, the elections will be held, and, on 31 December 2002, the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) will end.

In this connection, we welcome the presence at, and the participation in, this meeting of Mr. Solana, High Representative for Foreign Policy and Common Security of the European Union. We also appreciated the statements made at the beginning of this meeting, which enabled us to assess how far we have come and what has been done, as the Secretary-General said, to maintain the momentum for peace and reconciliation, and to establish a State based on the rule of law that respects human beings, their dignity and their rights.

Above all, those statements showed what action has to be taken in future. We were particularly enlightened by the statement made by the Secretary-General, whose vision and well-thought-out proposals will be helpful to our future work.

Having said this, my delegation would like to pay tribute to Mr. Wolfgang Petritsch and to Mr. Klein for the commitment they have demonstrated, for their creative imagination, for their very balanced approach and for their spirit of cooperation. We would like to commend the methodical work they have done, which has been very helpful.

That work has been especially noteworthy in the following areas: training of the police, education, promotion of human rights, the establishment of State institutions based on the rule of law, and, lastly, facilitating Bosnia and Herzegovina's integration into Europe. They helped to set up a multi-ethnic police force that respects human rights, trained those policemen and provided their equipment. We also commend the decision of the European Union to take over, as of 1 January 2003, from the International Police Task Force.

The second important area they have been working in is education. The report before us today shows clearly the importance of the contribution that was made in the preparation of textbooks and curricula that help to consolidate understanding and harmony. Cameroon believes that those efforts are important to the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

As the Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization states, since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed — hence, the importance of education.

The third important area, we believe, is that of the promotion of human rights. The progress made in the implementation of the Human Rights Chamber's decisions, as described in the report, is important and encouraging. It is most promising.

The fourth area is the establishment of State institutions based on the rule of law. We welcome the measures taken to hold elections on 5 October 2002. We would like to hear a response to the question asked by the representative of the United Kingdom about the pre-election atmosphere, particularly with respect to security.

We welcome the decision by the Council of the European Union to recommend membership of the Union for Bosnia and Herzegovina, because in our view this would be a factor to lay the groundwork for the country's future.

Finally, I wish every success to Lord Ashdown, who is replacing Mr. Wolfgang Petritsch as High

Representative. We renew our thanks to Mr. Petritsch for the work he has done.

The President: I thank the representative of Cameroon for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Valdivieso (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Let me begin by welcoming you, Mr. Jan Petersen, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Norway. We are honoured that you are in the Chair at this meeting. Let me also reaffirm Colombia's support for your delegation during its presidency; we know your leadership is a guarantee of success.

We also welcome Mr. Wolfgang Petritsch, High Representative for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Mr. Jacques Klein, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and we thank them for their informative briefings today. In addition, we are pleased to welcome Mr. Javier Solana, Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union; we are very grateful for his major announcements, which reflect the European Union's decisive cooperation with the United Nations and its coordinating and complementary efforts as a regional body.

As other delegations have noted, this meeting marks the beginning of a new stage in the work of the international community in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We welcome the European Union decision of 18 February to create the European Union Police Mission, which beginning in January 2003 will replace the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) in bolstering the professional development of the Bosnia and Herzegovina police force and in establishing institution-building activities and programmes.

As the Secretary-General has noted in his most recent report on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (S/2001/1132), regional actors should become more active in the successor mission to UNMIBH with a view to preserving what the Mission has achieved and to continuing its work in a regional framework.

Peace and sustainable development in Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to hinge on joint efforts by international entities such as UNMIBH, SFOR and the Office of the High Representative, among others, and by the Government and the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is therefore important that, before the official transition between missions next January, there be coordination among the various bodies in order to facilitate the transfer of functions. In our view, there must be close cooperation with the Government and civil society in Bosnia in order to link them to the transition process and ensure that it is a concerted process that will ensure the success of future programmes.

Mr. Petritsch's work as High Representative has been key in creating administrative structures and coordination programmes that have enabled Bosnia and Herzegovina to attain the political, economic and social development that today allow it to be a viable candidate for membership of the European Union; Mr. Petritsch has made mention of Europeanization as part of that process. We thank him for his work and wish him every success in his future endeavours.

We note the appointment of Lord Ashdown as the new High Representative; we wish him every success in his work. We welcome the European Union decision to name the new High Representative as its special representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, which in our view will facilitate coordination and exchanges of information between the new Police Mission and the Office of the High Representative. It also reflects the commitment of the European Union to centralizing the international community's endeavours in Bosnia and Herzegovina under its leadership.

In the light of that new regional context, the United Nations is redefining its role in the implementation of the Dayton Peace Accords. Clearly, there must be continued commitment to implementing the agreement, but in this new framework the responsibility of the United Nations, and especially that of the Security Council, will change. There must be agreement on the new cooperation structure as soon as possible to facilitate the transition.

Among the issues brought out in the introductory briefings today, what stood out was the need to insist on bringing to trial those responsible for crimes committed during the conflict. We share that priority, and thus we stress the need for SFOR to help capture those individuals and to send them to The Hague to appear before the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. We will therefore continue to call for greater cooperation by local authorities in seeing that due justice is done. It is therefore essential to spare no effort to strengthen the judicial system,

both to effect institutional enhancement and to bring about true reconciliation.

The President: I thank the representative of Colombia for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Wang Yingfan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): My delegation welcomes you, Mr. Minister, and expresses its pleasure at seeing you in the Chair at today's meeting. We thank the Secretary-General for his statement, and our thanks go also to Mr. Petritsch and Mr. Klein for their comprehensive briefings. We welcome Mr. Solana, and we thank him for his statement.

In recent years, the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) has made progress in police reform and training, and in the judicial field. This has laid a good foundation for the reconstruction and development of Bosnia. We hope that all the international agencies active in Bosnia and Herzegovina will work to enhance their coordination and cooperation so that, together, they can create the conditions necessary for the orderly departure of UNMIBH when it has fulfilled its core mandate.

With the help of the international community, Bosnia and Herzegovina has made remarkable progress in the political, economic, social and development spheres. The general elections, which will mark the people's true ownership of Bosnia and Herzegovina, are to take place in October. Yet there are still differences on key issues among the various ethnic communities and the main political parties. We believe that the urgent tasks for reconstruction and for the restoration of peace and stability in the region are to eliminate differences among ethnic communities, ease social tension and promote national reconciliation. Here, the international presence faces difficult tasks and has a long way to go. We hope that through reasonable streamlining, the international presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its work and speed up the process of national reconciliation there.

The peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina is at a critical stage. We welcome the European Union's decision to send a Police Mission following the end of UNMIBH's mandate. China will continue to support UNMIBH in its work, and we favour the adoption of a Security Council resolution in this respect.

In conclusion, we would like to express our appreciation to High Representative Petritsch, who for more than two years has accomplished much in coordinating the work of the agencies in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the reconstruction of that country. We welcome the European Union's designation of a new High Representative and hope that he will also play a constructive role in the reconstruction of Bosnia and Herzegovina and in promoting peace and stability in the region.

The President: I thank the representative of China for his kind words.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Norway.

But first, on behalf of the Security Council, I would like to thank High Representative Wolfgang Petritsch for having represented the international community in Bosnia and Herzegovina in an exemplary manner. Norway commends the High Representative's balanced approach: on the one hand, taking charge of the implementation of the Peace Agreements; on the other, encouraging the Bosnian authorities to show constructive leadership.

It is evident that local, entity and State officials in Bosnia and Herzegovina must increasingly take upon themselves the primary responsibility for progress in the reform process. At the same time, the international community must remain engaged. I agree with the High Representative that more focus should be given to strengthening institutional capacities and Bosnian "ownership" of the implementation of the Dayton Accords.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is on course for membership in the Council of Europe in the coming months. The elections scheduled for October will be the first for which the Bosnian authorities have the sole responsibility. These are important expressions of confidence by the international community. However, despite significant results thus far, extensive reforms are still needed to put Bosnia and Herzegovina firmly on the path to European integration. It rests with Bosnian leaders to demonstrate the political will to move forward. A case in point is the Constituent Peoples Decision. We strongly support the High Representative's call to the Bosnian leaders urgently to find a compromise solution.

We welcome the decisions of the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council on 28 February, including the decision on streamlining the international presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is vital that the international community act in a unified manner.

Norway commends Special Representative Klein and the personnel of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina for their strong contribution to the promotion of police reform and a self-sustaining peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We are proud of the International Police Task Force, which will leave behind it a legacy of professionalism and dedication. We warmly welcome the readiness of the European Union, as stated by Mr. Solana, to provide a European Union Police Mission to follow up the good work of the United Nations in this field. Norway strongly supports the development of a European crisis management capability. I am pleased to note that the European Union will also invite non-member States to participate in its Police Mission.

We support the efforts to strengthen the rule of law, including the judiciary, in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Much work remains to be done. Political extremists and common criminals continue to hamper the return process throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina. Individuals indicted by the International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia have yet to be brought to justice. Norway is pleased by the recent actions taken by the NATO-led Stabilization Force in this regard. We expect local, entity and State authorities and courts in Bosnia and Herzegovina to act to fulfil their obligations to cooperate fully with the Tribunal.

I support the High Representative's emphasis on a regional approach to integration. Neighbouring countries can make vital contributions to political stability and economic development in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Ethnic tensions, organized crime, illegal trafficking and political extremism must be dealt with in a regional framework. In recent months, we have seen progress in the normalization of political relations among the countries of the region. These relations must be based on mutual recognition of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each State. There are also signs of cooperation among business communities and societies. This is promising.

In conclusion, I welcome the designation of Lord Ashdown as the future High Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as also expressed in the Council resolution to be adopted in this meeting. I am convinced that he will enjoy the Council's full support in carrying on Mr. Petritsch's excellent work.

I now resume my function as President of the Council.

Mr. Kusljugić (Bosnia and Herzegovina): Thank you for the opportunity to participate in today's discussion on the occasion of the twenty-first report by the High Representative for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

The Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina welcomes the report and considers that today's session of the Security Council has a particular importance, not only for the peace-building process in my country, but also for stability in general in the region of South-Eastern Europe. We expect that the planned follow-on mission to the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) will mark a new, European phase in the peace implementation process and will open European Union perspectives for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I thank the Secretary-General for his presence and introductory statement and the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, for his address. I also thank the Special Representative, Jacques Paul Klein, and the High Representative, Javier Solana, for the comprehensive updates and comments in their briefings.

Bosnia and Herzegovina became a full member of the United Nations on 22 May 10 years ago. In May this year, when the final positive decision concerning its membership is expected, Bosnia and Herzegovina will be ready to become a full member of the Council of Europe. This time gap clearly indicates that for almost a decade, my country was a major global and regional problem. It is now obvious that the ideology of exclusive ethnic territories was at the core of the conflict.

During the last year, substantial progress was recorded in the peace implementation process in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This progress was achieved both as a result of more focused and coherent activities of the international community and because, for the first time since 1992, a democratic, multi-ethnic Government, committed to work in partnership with the international community in building a functioning,

democratic, multi-etnic, European-oriented Bosnian State, was finally established. The role of UNMIBH has been substantial in achieving progress in the rule-of-law sector, and the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina considers UNMIBH to have been successfully implemented. We thank Mr. Klein for his leadership and commitment.

We especially emphasize the assistance and very constructive role of UNMIBH in supporting the activities concerning the fight against terrorism initiated after the terrorist attacks on 11 September. The Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina has shown by its deeds a commitment to contribute to antiterrorism activities. In this regard, we have really proved to be a part of the solution to this global problem.

We clearly recognize UNMIBH's activities as an integral part of the international community's assistance to the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina within a recently developed partnership concept. We also acknowledge the efforts and contributions of the other United Nations agencies, especially concerning refugee returns. However, we consider the progress achieved in the last year to be only the first step in the process of building a sustainable country. In this process, the current priorities of the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina are those of institution-building, improvement in the rule of law sector and implementation of economic reforms.

Considering the long-term orientation of UNMIBH towards the self-sustainability of local institutions, we emphasize the need for further assistance from the international community, since the progress achieved so far is still fragile. In this context, we expect that the transition from the present UNMIBH mission to the European Union Police Mission (EUPM) will be both smooth and efficient. We would like to thank the European Union for accepting the challenge of working together with the local institutions in this important sector of the peace process implementation. The commitment and determination of Bosnia and Herzegovina institutions in this matter was confirmed in a letter to the Peace Implementation Council (PIC) and to the European Union, signed by the President of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Government and the Presidents of both entities, in which the EUPM is very welcome.

The European Union experience in the Europeanization process concerning the necessary structural reforms to be made in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in accordance with European standards, is of utmost importance. We expect that EUPM assistance will be focused on the further education of police and judiciary officials, as well as on the monitoring of the process of restructuring institutions and reform in the rule of law sector. In this regard, we welcome the proposed strategy for judicial reform in 2002-2003 and emphasize the need for more decisive and firmer measures to be taken by the international community for its implementation.

I would like to use this opportunity to stress the most important current issues in the process of political stabilization in my country.

First, it is expected that by the end of this month the implementation process of the Constitutional Court decision regarding equal rights of all constituent peoples on the whole territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina should be finalized. The implementation of the Court's decision will prove that the ideology of exclusive ethnic territories has been defeated. The outcome of this process will have a decisive impact on the results of the forthcoming general elections, too.

Secondly, the activities of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), especially the trial against Slobodan Milosevic, substantially influence the current political situation in my country. We expect the trial against Milosevic to prove his individual responsibility for the wars in the last decade and thus contribute to inter-ethnic reconciliation in the region.

However, we emphasize that a viable reconciliation process is not possible while indicted war criminals remain at large and while political leaders in the region refuse to cooperate fully with the Tribunal. Real reconciliation can be based only upon truth and justice. Six years after the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement, the failure to apprehend indicted war criminals — above all Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic, who are the symbols of suffering, pain and humiliation of the civilian population — prevents the beginning of a sincere inter-ethnic reconciliation and sustainable peace-building process. We want to emphasize that the leading role of the international community regarding arrest of the already indicted war criminals is of crucial importance and at

the same time a test of its credibility in the region. Its readiness to give utmost priority to making their arrests happen will be proof of its commitment to support the work of the ICTY and to the establishment of a system of international justice.

I would like to welcome the decision of the Peace Implementation Council and the proposed resolution of the Security Council regarding the appointment of Lord Paddy Ashdown as the new High Representative for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina. I also want to thank Mr. Wolfgang Petritsch for his commitment and leadership demonstrated during his mandate. I know that sometimes the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina looks very complicated and confusing for representatives of the international community. But, for the Bosnians, some activities of the representatives of the international community also look misleading and confusing.

Therefore, we expect that the mandate of the new High Representative will be based on a clear vision, strategy and concept of how to support the process of building a sustainable multi-ethnic Bosnia and Herzegovina. We also expect a more coherent policy and more coordinated work of the international institutions, and we welcome the proposed model to streamline their operations.

The Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina is also committed to working towards increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the local institutions. We expect to work together with representatives of the international community to find new models of institutional structures, especially at the level of State institutions, in order to achieve objectives that have been set.

Because the termination of UNMIBH's mandate by the end of this year is now certain, we think that the United Nations should prepare a comprehensive evaluation of its involvement in the Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement implementation. This evaluation could serve as a basis for further evolution of the peace process and guidance for an upgrade and update process of the current Bosnia and Herzegovina Dayton constitutional structure, in accordance with European human rights standards.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, whom I invite to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Šahović (Yugoslavia): Before addressing the subject under discussion today, I would like to congratulate Norway on the assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. It is a particular honour to participate in today's deliberations under your guidance, Your Excellency.

We are grateful for the Secretary-General's very important statement. I would like to thank Mr. Wolfgang Petritsch for his comprehensive report on the developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as for his briefing today, and to avail myself of this opportunity to convey the appreciation of my Government for his achievements as High Representative. Also, I extend our appreciation to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Jacques Klein, for his efforts and accomplishments in leading the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH), as well as for his detailed analysis today.

We are all aware of the importance of this meeting. It signifies the announcement of a new and significant phase of international commitment in Bosnia and Herzegovina in which the European Union will play a pivotal role. We have just heard Mr. Javier Solana's inspired assessment of this task. Indeed, this is yet another example of the European Union's involvement, which is so crucial to the entire region.

On this special occasion, allow me to reiterate that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, as a signatory of the Dayton/Paris Agreement, remains a staunch supporter of its full implementation. Yugoslavia has respected, and will continue to respect, the territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina and has demonstrated its readiness to develop cooperation with it. The relations between our countries are characterized by a dynamic political dialogue, exemplified by many contacts between the highest representatives of the two States.

As a follow-up to an earlier decision to establish an inter-State council, a meeting of the Council was held on 18 December 2001 to institutionalize all-round cooperation between the two countries. During the recent visit of Prime Minister Lagumdzija to Belgrade on 19 February, the Standing Committee of the Inter-State Council decided on a joint approach to projects financed by the international community, particularly

within the framework of regional cooperation and the Stability Pact. Close contacts between the parliaments of the two countries have been established as well. In November 2001, a delegation of the Assembly of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia paid the first visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina. A return visit followed in February this year.

In the area of political deliberations, bilateral relations between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Bosnia and Herzegovina are gradually being expanded into the field of economic and other forms of cooperation of the most immediate practical interest for the citizens of the two countries. A free trade agreement was signed in Belgrade on 1 February 2002, a significant step along the road of regional cooperation among Balkan States. An agreement on the encouragement of mutual investments and a customs cooperation agreement were also signed, as were a number of other accords that will enhance ties between the two economies and help secure a free flow of goods and capital. Dual citizenship issues are in the process of being regulated, as are the delineation of the borderline between Yugoslavia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. To that effect, an Inter-State Commission for the State Border has been established, and its work is progressing well.

Special parallel relations between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Republika Srpska should also be understood in the overall context of relations between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. They are firmly based on the Dayton/Paris Agreement, their framework was prepared in cooperation with the High Representative, and they are fully transparent.

One of the outstanding issues that requires sustained attention is the return of refugees. In this connection, I would like to point out that, as a result of my Government's initiative, the heads of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) missions to Yugoslavia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia have agreed on the principles for refugee returns. The document they signed in this connection was confirmed by the OSCE Standing Committee, as well as by a joint statement by the delegations of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Yugoslavia in Vienna, which was strongly welcomed by the OSCE. We hope that this important development will be reflected on the ground.

Yugoslavia has made its relations with neighbouring countries one of its foreign policy priorities. Through this lasting, strategic determination, we are contributing to the strengthening of regional stability, which is a prerequisite for, and the best means of, speeding up the process of integration into European and Euro-Atlantic structures — a goal that all of us in the region share. The further development and improvement of our relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina constitutes an extremely important element of such an approach. My Government also looks forward to working closely with Lord Ashdown, the newly designated High Representative, towards the fulfilment of this aim, and we wish him success in discharging the important responsibilities that he will soon assume.

The President: I thank the representative of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Croatia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Šimonović (Croatia): At the outset, I would like to welcome Ambassador Wolfgang Petritsch, High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Ambassador Jacques Klein, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH). I would also like to welcome Mr. Javier Solana, Secretary General of the Council and High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union, whose presence here is a clear sign of the European Union's commitment to ensuring the stability and prosperity of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

On number of occasions during his mandate, Mr. Petritsch found himself in virtually impossible situations — Bosnia and Herzegovina has a reputation for being the ultimate challenge for international officials. But his will and determination to perform his task prevailed over all difficulties.

I would like to assure his successor, Lord Ashdown, that Croatia is committed to continue to contribute to the stability and prosperity of Bosnia and Herzegovina and that he will be able to rely on our help while performing his role.

I have known Jacques Klein, and successfully cooperated with him, in various capacities for many years. His contribution to the success of the two completely different United Nations missions in South-East Europe — the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium in Croatia, and UNMIBH in Bosnia and Herzegovina — represents an unprecedented accomplishment.

The United Nations has decided that, at this particular moment, its presence is needed more elsewhere than it is in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The proposal has been made that it should be replaced by a regional organization. The European Union acted quickly, deciding to take over. In our view, that decision was the most appropriate. Taking into account Bosnia and Herzegovina's European aspirations, it is appropriate that the European Union should continue the daunting task of carrying out police reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We wish the European Union every success in its endeavours. As Bosnia and Herzegovina's neighbour and friend, and as aspirants to future European Union membership, we stand ready to provide assistance, if needed.

On the other hand, it will be possible for the United Nations to continue its presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina by monitoring human rights through the Special Representative of the Commission on Human Rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Mr. Cutileiro, whose future mandate will be discussed during the forthcoming session of the Commission in Geneva.

With regard to the United Nations Mission of Observers in Prevlaka — which, in its administrative aspect, is linked to UNMIBH — my Government believes that its mandate should, in its own right, expire by 15 July this year.

This year will be filled with important events for Bosnia and Herzegovina, and I have already briefly mentioned some of them. However, one of those events will have special importance for the future of the country: the admission of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Council of Europe on 2 May. That is going to accelerate democratic processes, the rule of law and the protection of human rights — developments that we in Croatia have experienced since the moment we joined the organization in 1996. Throughout the whole process of accession, Croatia was one of the staunchest advocates of the need for Bosnia and Herzegovina to join the Council of Europe. We are delighted to see this process coming to an end, and we wholeheartedly congratulate our neighbour on this well-deserved success.

If Bosnia and Herzegovina wants to fully embrace European standards with regard to the protection of human rights, it will have to adapt its institutional structure. Further efforts need to be made towards implementing the Constitutional Court's decision on the equal rights of all three constituent peoples throughout the whole territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We simply cannot expect the authorities in Sarajevo to implement all the requirements stemming from membership in the Council of Europe, while at the same time still struggling for the bare survival of an ethnically divided State.

My Government would like to see the parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina working together to bring about an evolution of the present constitutional arrangement so that it can respond to the new political environment and the new challenges arising from it. We hope that the forthcoming elections in October will represent another step in the development of a sustainable, European-oriented Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is our hope that these will provide a smooth transition from the "Dayton" Bosnia and Herzegovina, aimed at stopping the conflict and pragmatic life-saving, towards a "European" Bosnia and Herzegovina — a sustainable State, corresponding to European standards of good governance, the rule of law and the protection of human rights.

On the same note, we see acceptance in the Council of Europe only as a first step towards the further and deeper inclusion of Bosnia and Herzegovina into European integration. Hopefully in the near future, Bosnia and Herzegovina will start negotiating a stabilization and association agreement with the European Union — the type of agreement that Croatia recently signed. My Government stands ready to share our experiences of that process.

We firmly believe that the recently opened trial against Slobodan Milosevic, the former President of Serbia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, marks the beginning of a new era for our region. It is closing a chapter for hundreds of thousands of those in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo who lost their loved ones and had to continue to live with the bitter

memories. The trial of Slobodan Milosevic will also serve to benefit a better understanding of the course of events in the former Yugoslavia and, consequently, to benefit reconciliation among the people of South-East Europe.

Unfortunately, last week's attempts by the Stabilization Force (SFOR) to apprehend Radovan Karadzic, another notorious war criminal, were not successful. He is still at large and, together with Ratko Mladic, should remain at the priority list of The Hague Tribunal. The presence of Radovan Karadzic in Bosnia and Herzegovina constitutes a permanent threat to the stability of the country and creates a danger that has to be dealt with. The lack of success — or the lack of political will — to arrest Karadzic also negatively reflects on the credibility of SFOR and undermines international efforts in Bosnia and Herzegovina overall. I reiterate what I have said on previous occasions: there can be no sustainable Bosnia and Herzegovina with Karadzic and Mladic at large.

Croatia will continue to broaden the scope of bilateral cooperation with Bosnia and Herzegovina, with which we share a wide range of common interests. This cooperation, like every process, has its ups and downs, good periods and periods of missed opportunities. It is crucial that the general trend of bilateral relations remain positive. Just yesterday, the Croatian Deputy Foreign Minister visited Sarajevo and had a very constructive dialogue with the Bosnian leadership, while the Prime Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina will be visiting Zagreb later this week.

Let me conclude. Bosnia and Herzegovina is crucial to Croatia as our neighbour, as the homeland for Bosnian Croats, as our economic partner and as our friend. Therefore, Croatia is willing to fully support international efforts to facilitate a sovereign, stable and sustainable Bosnia and Herzegovina. Fully respecting that its constitutional arrangement is a matter for the three constituent peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina and of all its citizens, we sincerely hope that its new constitutional arrangement will truly reflect the equal rights of the three constituent peoples on all of its territory as a prerequisite for the successful return of refugees, for the protection of human rights, stability and sustainability, and for further successful inclusion into European integration processes.

The President: I thank the representative of Croatia for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Ukraine. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kuchinsky (Ukraine): I am glad to welcome you, Sir, to this Chamber, where the Norwegian peace philosophy — depicted in the famous mural before our eyes — has for decades inspired the Security Council's members. I would also like to join other speakers in congratulating your delegation upon its successful beginning of the Security Council presidency.

It is my special privilege to thank Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Secretary General/High Representative Javier Solana, High Representative Wolfgang Petritsch and Special Representative and Coordinator Jacques Paul Klein for their important statements today.

My delegation is also pleased to greet here the representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina, a country that had to go through the ordeal of war to become, I believe, a symbol of peace, inter-ethnic reconciliation and religious tolerance.

Ukraine welcomes the decision of the European Union (EU) to take on the United Nations-led international mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, starting its first crisis-management operation under the new Security And Defence Policy. The intention of the European Union to make a leading contribution to the streamlining of the overall civilian and police presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a fundamental step, which should accelerate further positive changes in that country. The EU activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina are not only a test case for the European ability to preserve what has been achieved in that country and to promote Europe-oriented development; it is also a clear political and economic challenge to the European Union's new crisis management strategies and methods.

In this context, Ukraine welcomes the agreement of the European Union to invite non-EU member States to participate in the future Police Mission. Having already expressed our interest in being involved in the EU-led military crisis-management operations and in the European Security and Defence Policy-related processes, including military and civilian aspects, my Government reiterates its readiness to contribute to the EU Police Mission. Having participated in all the international peacekeeping efforts in Bosnia and Herzegovina — from the United Nations Protection

Force, the Implementation Force and the Stabilization Force to the International Police Task Force — Ukraine remains committed to achieving the goals of peace and stability in that country.

I would like to inform the Council that, early next week, the special representative of the Ukraine in the Balkans, Deputy Secretary of State Ihor Kharchenko, will pay an official visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina to discuss practical forms of bilateral cooperation as well as other issues related to Ukraine's participation in international efforts in the region.

It is with regret that we learned of the decision of Mr. Wolfgang Petritsch to step down from his post at the end of May 2002. As was stated in his lucid briefing, visible results have been achieved in implementing priority tasks endorsed by the Peace Implementation Conference in May 2000.

My delegation notes with particular satisfaction positive changes in economic reform. Tangible progress has been made in the consolidation of state institutions. The implementation of Bosnia and Herzegovina's Constitutional Court's "Constituent Peoples' Decision" is in a crucial phase. Comprehensive reform of the judicial system has been instituted. In the past two years alone, there have been more than 130,000 returns of citizens to areas where their ethnic group was a minority. Finally, Bosnia and Herzegovina seems to be ready to hold general elections in October that will be the first since the end of the war to be organized by the local authorities.

In all these achievements, Ukraine recognizes the valuable contribution made by Mr. Wolfgang Petritsch. Appreciating his useful efforts during the past two and a half years, we wish Mr. Petritsch every success in his further endeavours. We also welcome the decision of the Peace Implementation Council to designate Lord Ashdown as the new High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina and pledge our full cooperation with him.

On behalf of the Government of Ukraine, I would like to pay tribute to the men and women of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH), led by Mr. Jacques Paul Klein.

My delegation is encouraged by the important good news from the field highlighted today by Mr. Klein and welcomes the valuable results obtained in the spheres of police reform, police restructuring, institution-building and inter-police force cooperation. We hope that all these positive developments will be preserved in the future and we strongly believe that the practical goals determined by UNMIBH will be successfully implemented by the EU follow-on mission.

Let me conclude by reiterating my country's utmost support for the intense efforts of Bosnia and Herzegovina to build a democratic and prosperous society with respect for the rights of each and every citizen. We look forward to further steps aimed at strengthening the principles of the rule of law and at fostering processes of institution-building and economic transformation.

My delegation also pays special attention to the protection of the rights of persons that belong to national minorities, in particular the Ukrainian community. This issue is still a matter of concern to us and we count on the further assistance of the High Representative/EU Special Representative in further improving the situation in this sphere. We also believe that Bosnia and Herzegovina's political leaders will demonstrate the necessary resolve to guide that country into a European community led by the European Union, the North Atlantic Alliance and the Council of Europe.

The President: I thank the representative of Ukraine for his kind words addressed to me.

I now give the floor to Mr. Wolfgang Petritsch to respond to the comments made and the questions raised.

Mr. Petritsch: As the time is already quite far advanced, I would like to just quickly respond to the issues of overall security prior to the elections and to the Croatian Democratic Community (HDZ).

With regard to the security situation, I believe Jacques Paul Klein will be able to give the Council more details as to the police and law-enforcement side of the overall situation there. I would like to take this opportunity to stress the fact that, in order to provide for a safe and secure environment, the continued presence of the Stabilization Force (SFOR) is of the utmost importance, both for the upcoming elections as well as for the immediate period thereafter.

I also believe that, ultimately, it is up to the local authorities to provide the necessary safety and security for their citizens. The reform of the judiciary and that

of the civil service, which is still ahead of us, are two very important aspects in fostering civilian security. The reform-oriented, multi-ethnic Government is very much aware of the fact that, in the immediate post-war era, security and, of course, personal safety are of great importance.

One of the continued security risks in Bosnia and Herzegovina, so to speak, is political and other types of extremism. But again, in this area the change has been quite considerable. That change can also be demonstrated even when it comes to the radical tendencies that prevailed in the course of last year in the HDZ. That is the second question I am trying to answer.

When I talk about extremism in the HDZ I am basically and exclusively referring to the radical top leadership, not to the great number of decent members of that party who are seriously, and rightly, concerned about the status of Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Again, I am confining myself to the radical top leadership that has tried to split away from the Constitutional Framework in the course of last year, when it was out-voted by the incoming reform-oriented Government, the Alliance for Change; when it called for a total boycott of Federation institutions; when it established extra-constitutional, illegal institutions; when it called for desertion and 7,000 ethnic Croats left the entity armed forces within days; when they called for a tax boycott — that, in fact, was the gravest crisis since Dayton — and when they also started to boycott the legislative bodies in the Federation and at the State level.

Things have changed very considerably since then. I have had to intervene forcefully. I had to dismiss the party President, who was also a member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina at the time. I had to put the Hercegovacka Banka, which served as a money-laundering institution for the radicals, under provisional administration. At the same time, I also continued the dialogue with the moderate forces in the Croat community and inside the HDZ.

The crisis has been basically over since November. The HDZ has returned to legislative bodies. It is very clear that there is now a split inside the party. The sidelined extremists realize that their time is over. It is also very clear now that this party will have to come up with new leadership. Changes are therefore imminent, thanks to the continued support that the Government in Zagreb is lending to reform and moderation inside the Croat community in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this regard, things are on the upswing. I believe we will see a better future for the Croat constituent people in Bosnia and Herzegovina once these decisions have been taken by the HDZ.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you, Mr. President, for your very kind words. I also wish to thank speakers for their kind words about my work and the achievements in more than two and a half years in Bosnia and Herzegovina. I think what is more important, of course, is the Council's continued support; because I am convinced that Bosnia and Herzegovina can indeed become a full-fledged member of the European community of sovereign States, as well as of the international community, of course. That will be the ultimate proof that our work in Bosnia and Herzegovina has not been in vain.

Ambassador Šimonović pointed out that this job is the ultimate challenge, and I fully agree with him. But we will ultimately be successful. That is also my conviction. I believe that, now that my mandate is drawing to a close, the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is far more promising than it was. That is thanks to the concerted efforts on the part of the international community, in conjunction with the partnership that has been built over the past couple of months. I again urge the Security Council to fully continue to support Bosnia and Herzegovina. I personally urge the Council to give its full support to my successor.

The President: I thank Mr. Petritsch for the clarifications he has provided.

I now give the floor to Mr. Jacques Paul Klein to respond to the comments made and questions raised.

Mr. Klein: I will also be brief.

Police professionalism is improving, but we need to pay the police a living wage. A food basket for a family of four in Bosnia and Herzegovina costs 450 convertible marks. Many policemen are paid less than that. We know, obviously, that in all of our countries, when you pay the police and civil servants a reasonable wage, you minimize corruption. Our major goal this year is the rationalization of police salaries. We will be working closely with the leadership of the Federation and the Republika Srpska to discuss, and address, that issue.

With regard to Herzegovina, I think much depends on the constitutional decisions that will be made in the coming weeks. As I said three weeks ago in Mostar, the Croats needs to engage constructively with the State institutions to use the power they have. Bosnia and Herzegovina cannot work as a European State without Croats and Serbs, but they have too often been misguided and misled by leaders who put their own financial interests above the interests of their people. We have an old Alsatian proverb that says "If you ride a dead horse, you're not going to get very far." It is time they got off the dead horse. We still have all too many leaders who led them into war and not into peace. They have addressed a past that they cannot change; there is a future they cannot yet see. Some people still vote too "ethnically"; they still do not vote economically or politically, as we wish they would.

In closing, let me say that progress in Bosnia and Herzegovina may be slow. It is, at times, hesitant. But there is real progress. Obstructionists remain, but there is an old Bosnian proverb that says "The dogs may bark, but the caravan moves on."

Finally, let me also thank and congratulate my colleague Wolfgang Petritsch for the work he has done in Bosnia and Herzegovina. I also thank the President and the members of the Council for their generous comments directed at my people. I will take those back to Sarajevo with me, and let them know that you think kindly of them.

The President: I thank Mr. Klein for the clarifications he has provided.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution (S/2002/221) to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bulgaria, Cameroon, China, Colombia, France, Guinea, Ireland, Mauritius, Mexico, Norway, Russian Federation, Singapore, Syrian Arab Republic, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1396 (2002).

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.40 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4485

Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4485th meeting

Wednesday, 6 March 2002, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Petersen	(Norway)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Belinga-Eboutou
	China	Mr. Chen Xu
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Doutriaux
	Guinea	Mr. Boubacar Diallo
	Ireland	Mr. Corr
	Mauritius	Mr. Koonjul
	Mexico	Ms. Lajous
	Russian Federation	Mr. Gatilov
	Singapore	Mr. Mahbubani
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Wehbe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Harrison
	United States of America	Mr. Williamson

Agenda

The situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia

Report of the Security Council mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea (S/2002/205).

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

02-27493 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia

Report of the Security Council mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea (S/2002/205)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Eritrea, Ethiopia, Japan, the Netherlands and Spain, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In accordance with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Seyoum (Eritrea), Mr. Tessema (Ethiopia), Mr. Motomura (Japan), Mr. van den Berg (Netherlands) and Mr. Arias (Spain) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Ole Peter Kolby, head of the Security Council mission to Eritrea and Ethiopia.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Ole Peter Kolby, head of the Security Council mission to Eritrea and Ethiopia, to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations. Members of the Council have before them document S/2002/205, containing the report of the Security Council mission to Eritrea and Ethiopia from 21 to 25 February 2002.

I give the floor to Mr. Kolby, head of the Security Council mission to Eritrea and Ethiopia.

Mr. Kolby: It is an honour for me to introduce the report of the recent Security Council mission to Eritrea and Ethiopia. Thanks to the efficiency of the Council and the Secretariat, the report has already been available for some days, and we should all have received a copy.

Before going into the more substantive aspects of the report, however, I would like to take this opportunity to express the sincere gratitude of all the members of the Council to the two countries and their leaders for the warm welcome and hospitality extended to the mission in Addis Ababa and Asmara, as well as during our visit in the field. Indeed, it was a great privilege for me to lead a mission under such positive and conducive circumstances in both countries.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express the mission's appreciation to the United Nations Mission in Eritrea and Ethiopia (UNMEE); the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ambassador Legwaila; and the Force Commander, Major General Cammaert, as well as the Secretariat branch, for effectively facilitating the logistics during the trip, allowing us to cover a lot of ground in three days and to experience UNMEE firsthand.

We also visited an internally displaced persons camp and areas affected by the war. The insights gained during the mission will be useful in the Council's further considerations of and support for the process.

Finally, I thank my fellow Council members for their constructive participation in the mission. That support, extended to my delegation throughout the mission, was exemplary. The fact that all members of the Council participated in the mission testifies to the importance being given by the international community to the peace process between Ethiopia and Eritrea. I am honoured to say that the report before the Council reflects a united Council, a Council committed to actively assist the parties in implementing the Algiers Agreements and to contribute to the completion of the peace process.

The mission revealed that the parties remain committed to the implementation of the Algiers Agreements. The meetings held with Prime Minister Meles Zenawi in Addis Ababa and with President Isaias Afwerki in Asmara further underscored the parties' desire to work closely with the United Nations to this end.

On our side, the mission emphasized to the two leaders the commitment of the Security Council to fully play its role in this regard. The mission strongly commended the contributions to date by UNMEE in discharging its mandate and towards improving the situation of the people, especially in the Temporary Security Zone. The mission understood that quick-impact projects have been particularly helpful. The arrangements for such projects ought to be continued.

Our meetings in the two capitals were all convened in a very constructive spirit. The meetings with Prime Minister Zenawi and President Afwerki highlighted the progress made in the peace process to date and the upcoming final legal settlement of the border issue. The mission welcomed recent statements by both sides reaffirming that the decision by the Boundary Commission is final and binding. The mission commended both parties for having chosen to resolve their differences through an international conflict-solving mechanism. It also commended both parties for having given the United Nations such a central role in implementing the Boundary Commission's decision.

The mission emphasized that the implementation of the Boundary Commission's decision must commence immediately upon its announcement. The process should be expeditious and at the same time ensure that stability is maintained in all areas affected by the decision. The mission impressed upon the parties the need to work closely together with the United Nations in the implementation phase ahead and to refrain from any kind of unilateral action, which could have seriously destabilizing effects.

In accordance with article 14 of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities, the security arrangements are to remain in effect. Accordingly, arrangements for the separation of forces, as achieved by the Temporary Security Zone, will continue to be of key importance. UNMEE must continue its important work in this regard until the demarcation has been completed.

It is of paramount importance that transfer of territory and civil authority, as well as population and troop movements, take place in an orderly manner under an agreed framework. The parties must cooperate constructively with the Special Representative, Ambassador Legwaila, and members of the Council to this end. A significant amount of good will on both sides will be necessary to avoid delaying the process. Together, we must firmly move the process forward and, hence, actively help the situation of people in affected areas.

To this end, demining will be critical. The mission understood both parties to be ready to move the demining forward, in cooperation with UNMEE, as a matter of utmost priority. The concrete follow-up in this regard will be critical for the process of demarcation. During the mission, we received a briefing by the UNMEE Mine Action Coordination Centre, which underlined the importance of the demining for the demarcation work as well as for the safety of the people. No efforts can be spared in this regard.

Concerning the outstanding operational issues, the parties reiterated to the mission their well-known positions. The mission strongly urged both parties to comply fully with their obligations under the Algiers Agreements to provide UNMEE with the working conditions it requires. At the same time, the mission urged both parties to look to the future in order to find constructive modalities for cooperation and coexistence on the basis of the Boundary Commission's decision.

The mission particularly highlighted the parties' obligation under international humanitarian law and under the Algiers Agreements to release and return without delay all prisoners of war and civilian detainees.

The mission also met with the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), Mr. Amara Essy, and with representatives of the diplomatic community, United Nations agencies, international non-governmental organizations and civil society in both countries. The mission was briefed on the humanitarian situation in both countries. The mission commended the integrated approach taken by United Nations agencies and international donors and non-governmental organizations in their efforts to alleviate the suffering and to promote the peace process.

The mission underlined the importance of a broad approach to confidence-building between the two countries. It acknowledged in that regard the recent progress in the dialogue among religious leaders and encouraged representatives of civil society in the two countries to pursue other initiatives to enhance mutual trust.

The mission visited the Mereb river bridge, on which I gave a brief speech. I indicated that a bridge between minds also needed to be developed for the two neighbouring countries to live in the prosperity that the people so much crave and deserve.

In the important period ahead, the OAU and the facilitators and witnesses of the Algiers Agreements are strongly encouraged actively to support the process and to stand firmly behind the efforts of the United Nations, in close cooperation with the parties.

In our consideration of the renewal of the mandate of UNMEE, later this month, we need to provide as much clarity with respect to the implementation phase as possible. We must clearly define the tasks ahead and the division of labour. However, as the Boundary Commission's decision will not be available at the time of the consideration of the mandate, the Council should stand ready to further consider how the United Nations can fully support the demarcation process in close cooperation with the parties once a decision is announced.

The President: On behalf of the Council, I should like to express gratitude and appreciation to all the members of the Security Council mission, which was very ably led by Ambassador Kolby, for the manner in which they discharged this important responsibility on the Council's behalf.

Ms. Lajous (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): The recent Security Council mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea continued the Council's practice of assessing on the ground the situations that form part of its programme of work. We are gratified that all members of the Council participated in the mission, because this demonstrated their shared determination to send a message of support for the peace process between those two countries.

The high points of the mission were undoubtedly its meetings with the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Mr. Meles Zenawi, and with the President of Eritrea, Mr. Isaias Afwerki. The constructive exchanges with both leaders strengthened the relationship between their countries and the United Nations. In particular, the meetings emphasized the positive contribution of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) in building confidence between the two parties.

The Security Council mission was successful because it met its goal: to assure the leaders of the two countries that the United Nations will continue to support them during the phase of implementing the forthcoming decision of the Boundary Commission.

It is our hope that the Ethiopian and Eritrean authorities will keep open channels of communication with UNMEE and with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in order to set up a system for cooperation, which will be indispensable in the implementation of that decision. We reiterate our conviction that the adoption of unilateral measures could affect the sense of trust that both parties must evince. We appeal to the guarantors, witnesses and facilitators of the Algiers Agreements for their support in this crucial phase of the peace process.

One of the clearest conclusions of the Security Council mission was that the international community needs to support both countries' demining efforts, especially during the physical demarcation of the borders. We hope that donors will contribute to the special United Nations trust fund to remove the antipersonnel mines that pose a serious threat to the peoples of Ethiopia and of Eritrea.

We want to convey our appreciation to the personnel of UNMEE for their effective efforts to coordinate with the agencies of the United Nations system and the non-governmental organizations that carry out projects to meet the humanitarian needs of the refugees and internally displaced persons in the Temporary Security Zone. Talks between members of the Security Council mission and representatives of such organizations enabled us to grasp the dimensions of their work and of the challenges that they daily face.

One pending task for the Security Council is to define an exit strategy for UNMEE once the physical demarcation of the borders is complete, taking special care to preserve the progress made in the gradual process of normalizing relations between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Here, in addition to the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity and subregional organizations have a major role to play.

Let me conclude by thanking the Government of Norway and Ambassador Ole Peter Kolby for the support and leadership that made it possible for the Security Council mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea to be a success.

The President: I thank the representative of Mexico for her kind words.

Mr. Mahbubani (Singapore): The Council, Sir, is greatly honoured that this meeting is being personally chaired by the Foreign Minister of Norway, because this demonstrates your country's commitment to this issue and to other issues in the Horn of Africa. Certainly, we would like to begin by congratulating you on your initiative to launch the Security Council mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea. I hope this demonstrates also that elected members can make a difference in the work of the Council. We also want to join our colleague from Mexico in congratulating Ambassador Kolby on the leadership he provided before, during and after the mission. We further thank the Government of Norway for the aircraft and logistical support that were provided us. We also want to thank the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) and the Secretariat staff for their vital role in making arrangements for the visit.

I would also like at this juncture to pay special tribute to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ambassador Legwaila Joseph Legwaila, and his team in UNMEE for their sterling work and for their tireless efforts in furthering the peace process. The one thing I learned when I travelled down there is that Ambassador Legwaila does not have a simple nine-to-five job. Indeed, he seems to be on the move all the time between the two countries and visiting all corners of the border. We have every confidence in Ambassador Legwaila and we fully support his work in Eritrea and Ethiopia. We believe that as the mandate of UNMEE is up for renewal — and I gather it is up for renewal very soon, on 15 March — it is important for the Council to give strong endorsement of and a clear mandate for its continued work.

We believe that the Security Council Mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea was indeed timely. I can say this with some conviction because, before we left, I actually had some personal questions as to whether or not our timing was right, given the fact that the Boundary Commission's decision was postponed. But I thought, having returned from the visit, that indeed it was very useful because it actually sensitized Council members to the real dynamic and the situation on the ground in Ethiopia and Eritrea. I must confess that I have come back with a heightened sense of the complex challenges that we face in the coming weeks. Certainly the Security Council will face a real challenge in handling the issue of the decision of the Boundary Commission, and we hope that the Council will rise to the challenge. Next week, when we engage in our informal consultations on the subject, I hope that the Council members will seriously reflect on this issue.

The road to peace in Ethiopia and Eritrea has been long and difficult. That is why we believe that the leaders of both countries deserve tremendous commendation for their resolve and determination to move the peace process forward to forge a lasting peace. As Ambassador Kolby stressed earlier, when he presented his report: both parties remain committed to the Algiers Agreement. Prime Minister Meles Zenawi has said that Ethiopia will continue to be engaged positively, while President Isaias Afwerki has affirmed that the implementation of agreements already signed should not pose serious problems. We welcome both of these public commitments to work constructively with UNMEE to implement the final and binding decision of the Boundary Commission in accordance with the Algiers Agreements, and we hope that our visit has in many ways strengthened the commitment of these leaders.

As the legal ruling on the boundary question will soon be announced, it is useful for us to look ahead to prepare for the next phase. While we note that the two countries may have differing perspectives on how to implement the boundary decision, this only underscores, in our view, the importance of both sides engaging with Ambassador Legwaila to work out a common understanding on the modalities for implementing delimitation and demarcation expeditiously. However, regardless of the detailed modalities, one key principle to emphasize — and I am glad Ambassador Kolby emphasized this in his report also — is that both parties should refrain from any unilateral or destabilizing actions in the run-up to and following the boundary decision.

At this point, I would like to make an observation about an apparent paradox in the situation that we face. On the one hand, there has been relatively good compliance — indeed, I would say very good compliance — with UNMEE in implementing the Algiers Agreements on the ground. But, on the other hand, there is also considerable uneasiness and, perhaps, some tension in the atmosphere. Evidently, the deep wounds and the hurt arising from two and one half years of conflict will take time to heal.

Nevertheless, we will call on the two countries and their leadership to make every effort to rise above the unhappy past and, as has been alluded to by both Governments, to look forward to a new chapter of coexistence in which they can focus on combating poverty and on socio-economic development for the benefit of their peoples.

In this regard, we would like to briefly draw attention to four critical aspects that we think are fundamental to promoting normalization and rehabilitation.

First, demining remains a top priority, as Ambassador Kolby has said, in order to create conditions for the safe return of internally displaced persons, as well as to allow affected areas to be restocked for traditional uses like agriculture and livestock-grazing. I think one of the most vivid memories we will take back from the visit is actually observing the education of young children on demining. To see the fields firsthand is a much more vivid educational experience than anything we can say in this room. We believe that the demining work is a very important part of UNMEE's work.

Secondly, it is important for both sides to carry out the release of the remaining prisoners of war and civilian detainees without preconditions and delay, as provided for under the Algiers Agreement.

Thirdly, effective demobilization needs to be carried out so that scarce resources can be channelled into national development and rehabilitation.

Fourthly, confidence-building measures should be encouraged in order to rebuild the links between civil society on both sides of the border. In this connection, we are encouraged by the recent meeting of religious leaders in Addis Ababa and Asmara, which represents a significant breakthrough in enhancing people-to-people contacts, and I am glad that Ambassador Kolby also arranged for us to meet the religious leaders on both sides. We certainly agree with a key point that Ambassador Kolby made when he spoke at the Mereb River Bridge: we now need to build bridges between minds on both sides.

At the same time, we also urge both countries to demonstrate flexibility and to cooperate with UNMEE on all the other outstanding issues contained in the statement of the President of the Security Council of 16 January 2002, including, firstly, ensuring freedom of movement for UNMEE; secondly, disclosure of information on militia and police units in the Temporary Security Zone; thirdly, resolution of the status-of-forces agreement; fourthly, the provision of specific mine information; and fifthly, establishing a direct air corridor between Asmara and Addis Ababa. If I may make a personal comment here, I find it very puzzling that we cannot get an agreement to establish a flight that goes in a straight line between Addis Ababa and Asmara. Our failure to achieve this is really quite surprising.

We hope that resolving these issues will help in promoting mutual confidence and demonstrating good faith in moving the peace process forward. Indeed, as both sides have actually complied with all the key issues of these Agreements, it will be even better testimony of their good will if they can cooperate in these few remaining areas that we have listed in the presidential statement.

Finally, let me emphasize the important role of the international community in supporting the two countries' steps to peace. Some members have pledged practical assistance in the form of demining and developmental programmes. Others, including the guarantors and facilitators of the Algiers peace process, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Security Council can provide credible political support. I agree with Ambassador Kolby that our meeting with the Secretary-General of the OAU, Amara Essy, was very important in this regard. Clearly, the subregion has suffered conflict and instability for far too long. Eritrea and Ethiopia are now at the threshold of a new chapter in their history and they deserve every bit of support and encouragement from the global community as they work with UNMEE towards a lasting peace.

The President. I thank the representative of Singapore for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Gatilov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are also grateful to Ambassador Peter Kolby for the report he has submitted to the Council and for his very skilful leadership of the Security Council mission in its trip to Ethiopia and Eritrea.

The situation in the area of the conflict remains calm. This is a major achievement of the peace process. First, it reflects the good will of both parties, and it is also the result of the joint efforts of the Security Council, the Secretary-General, the leader and

members of the Security Council mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea and the Organization of African Unity.

The Council mission to the area of the conflict contributed in a concrete manner to United Nations actions in this sphere. We support the recommendations of the mission and, together with other members of the Security Council, we are prepared to work constructively on their implementation.

The Russian Federation has consistently advocated a peaceful settlement of the territorial dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea on the basis of the principles of the United Nations Charter and in strict compliance with the norms of international law. We are very pleased that, during the mission's stay in the region, the leaders of both countries, Meles Zenawi and Isaias Afwerki, again confirmed their unfailing commitment to the peace agreements and their readiness to comply with the forthcoming decision of the independent Boundary Commission.

We believe that the future work of the Security Council should focus on ensuring favourable conditions for the implementation of measures on demarcation and delimitation of the border. It is important for both parties to the conflict to continue to follow the spirit and letter of the Algiers Agreements and not to undertake any unilateral acts that might jeopardize peace and security in the Horn of Africa.

An enormous responsibility rests on the shoulders of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), which has already undertaken serious efforts to maintain security. But it must do even more. It must work vigorously, and supervise the effectiveness of the separation of the armed forces of the parties in the Temporary Security Zone until the boundary demarcation measures have been fully implemented.

The actions taken to restore the climate of trust and good-neighbourliness between the people of Ethiopia and Eritrea, so badly affected by war, deserve our special encouragement. A beginning has been made, and we hope that efforts in this direction will continue.

The forthcoming verdict of the Boundary Commission is intended to remove the deep-rooted reason for the bloody conflict. It will be an important milestone in the settlement process. We call on the United Nations to provide all necessary assistance to the Boundary Commission, as well as all necessary resources through the fund set up by the Secretary-General.

Mr. Williamson (United States): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, in your capacity as the Norwegian Foreign Minister, for the strong interest that your country has shown in this issue and the critical role you have already played in advancing the peace process. I would also like to note at the outset my appreciation and debt to Ambassador Kolby for his leadership with respect to the mission, the report and this particular issue in general.

The Council mission travelled to Ethiopia and Eritrea to underscore the international community's support for the statesmanship that both Governments are demonstrating in resolving their border conflict through peaceful means. In particular, we travelled to the region to convey the Council's welcome for the public statements both Governments have made reaffirming that the Boundary Commission's decision is final and binding. With this early action to reaffirm their commitments to honour the Commission's decision, the groundwork has been laid for the two Governments, the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) and this Council to turn to the next stage in the peace process — the modalities of implementing the Commission's decision. I believe that that should be the focus of the Council's attention, and that is what I would like to focus on in my brief remarks today.

The report of the Council mission contains recommendations on the main issues relating to implementation. My delegation endorses those recommendations. There are two points I would like to make in the light of those recommendations in order to clarify United States thinking as the Council and the parties focus on implementation of the Commission decision.

First, the mission's discussions in both capitals only reaffirmed our view that the parties need to act quickly to work out the modalities of implementation. We do not doubt that both parties will carry out their commitments under the Algiers Agreements and that they are committed to maintaining peace. Unfortunately, we also do not doubt that the lack of direct communication and trust between the parties risks having a simple misunderstanding by one side spiral into a series of miscalculations that could lead to

a breakdown of this peace process. For that reason, both Governments need to fully engage with UNMEE to reach an understanding on the modalities of implementation.

In the ceasefire and Algiers Agreements, the parties laid down the basic principles to govern the post-implementation period, but the exact implementation procedures and responsibilities for implementation need to be worked out and confirmed. In the absence of confirmation on the exact sequence of steps during the implementation phase, the risks of miscalculation by either side remain high. We urge the parties to move forward now, without waiting for the Commission's decision to be announced, and to work with UNMEE on spelling out the procedures for implementation as soon as possible.

We also agree with the report's recommendation that the parties would benefit from having another parallel forum or interlocutor for discussion of broader implementation issues and problem-solving. The parties need to identify a third party or mechanism to which they can turn for direct mediation or good offices, as they work out implementation issues in coordination with UNMEE. This forum or third party could be the "911" the parties could call when they cannot reach agreement on an implementation issue, or when they need clarification of one side's action to avoid a spiral of counter-actions. As the mission's report suggests, this is a role that one or more of the friends of Ethiopia and Eritrea or the witnesses to the Algiers Agreements might play. We encourage the parties to consider this suggestion and, in coordination with UNMEE, to identify now an organization or third parties that could play that role during the next phase of the peace process.

Secondly, the United States remains concerned at the parties' lack of planning on how they will implement the demining required to complete border demarcation. As the mission notes in paragraph 21 of its report, under the Algiers Agreements the primary responsibility for demining lies with the parties. The United States Government envisioned that UNMEE would provide technical demining advice and training support to the parties. But we look to the parties to undertake, in line with their commitments, the actual demining needed for demarcation. In our view, the parties' original decision to carry out demining themselves was important, because their demining efforts would be valuable confidence-building measures. Having the parties engage in demining could create an environment of good faith as the implementation phase moves forward.

To help both sides prepare to carry out that demining responsibility, the United States Government has provided demining training and resources to both the Ethiopian and Eritrean Governments. In each country, an American contractor is currently overseeing two trained companies in surveying and demining.

Given that background, we are disappointed that during the mission we heard no evidence that either side is preparing plans for how they can carry out the needed demining. There has been inadequate consultation between the parties and UNMEE on the demining plans of the parties.

The United States Government supports the proposal contained in paragraph 35 of the mission's report that the Council request the Secretary-General to submit recommendations at an early stage on how to implement demarcation, including the necessary demining. In making his recommendations, the Secretary-General will need to consider the demining capacity of the parties, UNMEE's current demining capabilities and the political need for demarcation to be completed as expeditiously as possible. The Secretary-General will also need to consider the parties' existing commitment to carry out demining, the importance of the confidence-building contribution the parties carrying out demining can provide and the need to limit UNMEE's costs and size as much as possible.

We look forward to considering the Secretary-General's recommendations. Those recommendations will, by necessity, follow after the Commission's decision, in late March. In our view, after a technical rollover in UNMEE's current mandate this month, the Council should take up the issue of demining and the respective roles of the parties and UNMEE later this spring. The United States calls upon both parties to work with UNMEE in the interim to develop realistic plans for carrying out their demining commitments in the best way possible. The parties need to engage with UNMEE in good faith on this issue so that the Secretary-General will have all the information he needs in order to make useful recommendations.

Let me close by echoing the comments of others in thanking you, Mr. President, and your staff on the Norwegian delegation for orchestrating such a productive and successful mission. I also wish to thank

Ambassador Kolby for his effective leadership. Through you, Mr. President, let me also extend my warmest thanks to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations here in New York and to UNMEE on the ground for their work in planning our visit and making our arrangements. I was most impressed with the knowledge, dedication and patience of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations staff who travelled with us and of the UNMEE representatives with whom we met in each country. I also extend, through you, Mr. President, my appreciation to the Governments of Ethiopia and Eritrea for their hospitality during our visits and for their willingness to engage in frank discussions with us.

The President: I thank the representative of the United States for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Chen Xu (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): At the outset, I would like to welcome you, Mr. President, as you chair this public meeting today.

Recently, the Security Council mission successfully visited Ethiopia and Eritrea and presented a report, thereby demonstrating the Council's firm support of and commitment to the peace process in Ethiopia and Eritrea. We would like to express our appreciation for the outstanding leadership of Ambassador Kolby and for the efforts of the Permanent Mission of Norway. I would also like to thank the Governments of Ethiopia and Eritrea for their warm hospitality, as well as the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) for the meticulous arrangements they made.

The peace process in Ethiopia and Eritrea is at a crucial stage. On the one hand, the border area — particularly the Temporary Security Zone — is basically calm. Both sides have reiterated that the decision of the Boundary Commission will be binding and final. Both sides have also agreed to have the United Nations play a central role in the implementation of the Boundary Commission's decision. On the whole, the situation is an encouraging one. That is a result of the efforts made by both sides in the peace process.

On the other hand, the Peace Agreement itself does not mean that peace will naturally appear. The specific modalities for implementing the decision still need to be determined. Issues such as demining, refugees and the release of prisoners of war still need to be resolved. In order genuinely to put aside past differences, increase confidence and dispel mistrust, it will be necessary for both sides to make further efforts. We hope that both countries can, in the interests of their peoples, scrupulously fulfil their commitments to accept the decision of the Boundary Commission in order to create favourable conditions for peace and the development of the two countries.

It also needs to be pointed out that while it might be easy to draw a boundary line on a piece of paper, it is much harder to physically demarcate that boundary on the ground. Like others, we hope that the two countries will, in a timely manner, reach agreement on specific modalities for implementing the decision. At the same time, they must demonstrate calm and restraint and maintain the security of the Temporary Security Zone, avoiding any unilateral actions that would negatively affect the peace process.

UNMEE has done a lot of work in maintaining tranquillity in the Temporary Security Zone and in easing tensions between the two countries. We wish to commend and support the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Joseph Legwaila, to move the peace process forward. In the current situation, it is even more necessary for the parties to the conflict to strengthen their cooperation with UNMEE through concrete actions. We also hope that UNMEE will continue its current efforts to play a positive role in the smooth implementation of the Boundary Commission's decision.

The Chinese delegation endorses the analysis and proposals made in the report of the visiting mission, including the proposal to extend UNMEE's mandate.

Consolidating the development of the peace process requires not only the joint efforts of the Governments of the two countries, but also cooperation between United Nations agencies and full cooperation between the United Nations, Ethiopia, Eritrea, the Organization of African Unity, humanitarian agencies and non-governmental organizations. We sincerely hope that the conflict will be resolved at an early date in order to inject new vitality into the momentum for resolving other conflicts on the African continent.

The President: I thank the representative of China for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Belinga-Eboutou (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): My delegation is pleased to see you, Mr. President, presiding over this public meeting of the

Security Council on the situation in Ethiopia and Eritrea. Norway's contribution to conducting the Security Council's recent mission in those countries and to its success is incalculable. Well-deserved tribute should be paid to Ambassador Kolby for his great human qualities and for the tact, skill, flexibility, adroitness and spirit of circumspection with which he conducted the mission. Above all, tribute should be paid to him for his great ability to listen. Likewise, I wish to extend my congratulations to his entire team and to all the members of the Secretariat who participated in the mission and devoted themselves to its success.

The report that has just been presented to us by Ambassador Kolby, the observations and recommendations of which we support, illustrates the value and importance of the meetings held by the delegation. Above all, it underscores the importance and potential of this Security Council mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea.

The mission took place a few weeks prior to the publication of the decision of the Boundary Commission, which is expected at the end of this month. The importance of that decision has become evident, but what is even more important for the future of the two countries is for them to accept and in good faith implement the Commission's decision. They committed themselves to doing so in the Algiers Peace Agreement, and their highest authorities reaffirmed this on the occasion of the mission's visit.

The international community expects the two countries to take, in a concerted manner, every necessary step to make it possible for the demarcation operations to be conducted rapidly. The international community expects them to refrain from any unilateral action that could re-ignite tensions. We encourage the two countries to elaborate confidence-building measures and fully to implement the provisions of the Algiers Agreement, in particular as regards the immediate release of prisoners of war and of all persons detained as a result of the conflict.

My delegation is gratified by the calm that has prevailed since the signing by the two countries on 18 June 2000 of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities and subsequently of the Algiers Peace Agreement. In this respect, we want to commend their leaders for having displayed restraint and for having opted for a peaceful settlement of their border dispute.

The role of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) in stabilizing the situation and in creating conditions conducive to the strengthening of the peace process has been, and remains, vital. In this respect, we wish warmly to congratulate the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ambassador Legwaila Joseph Legwaila, and all of the staff of UNMEE for their constructive and well-balanced approach to the task of fulfilling the mission's mandate and for their resolute commitment to working with the civilian population, which is the victim of the conflict.

Local United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations are also doing outstanding work in this context — work that deserves our full encouragement and that inspires respect. It is undeniable that UNMEE's fundamental role can only increase following the decision of the Boundary Commission, and therefore it seems vital that it be maintained as a guarantee of positive developments in future. That is why Cameroon strongly supports the renewal of UNMEE's mandate for a further six-month period. Naturally, that mandate should be adapted as necessary, so that UNMEE can provide the support expected of it for the demarcation process.

The role of the guarantors of the peace process, of the facilitators, of the friends of Ethiopia and Eritrea, and of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) is a crucial one. It is important that those entities, together with the parties, engage in an intensive dialogue, encouraging them to cooperate in good faith with UNMEE with a view to the implementation of the decision of the Boundary Commission, the full implementation of the Algiers Agreement, the development of confidence-building measures, and the normalization of relations between the two countries and the two parties.

The international community, and in particular the donor community, must rally now more than ever to strengthen the peace process. Consistent support for demarcation activities, for mine clearance, for the reintegration of displaced persons and refugees, and for the reconstruction and the economic and social recovery of the two countries is more necessary than ever.

This kind of support will, in any event, make it possible to make major progress in establishing a lasting peace in the region. The publication of the

decision by the Boundary Commission at the end of March will represent a decisive stage in the history of relations between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Cameroon appeals urgently to the leaders and the peoples of those two fraternal countries to write a new chapter in the history of their relations. It is worth recalling that those relations must be relations of peace, of harmony, of fraternity and of shared prosperity — which they never should have ceased to be. Peace between Ethiopia and Eritrea is necessary. This is a historical and geographical imperative. Peace between Ethiopia and Eritrea is possible, and the recent meeting between the religious leaders of the two countries bears witness to this.

May the seeds that have now been sown germinate and bear fruit. Today more than ever the Ethiopians and the Eritreans, having learned well from the past, have the option of building the future with optimism. In this regard, and bearing in mind the profession of faith and hope of Antonio Machado, who said that the future is no more fixed than is the past, let me say that it is true: the future is not yet written. The building of a future of peace between Ethiopia and Eritrea cannot be the result of chance. Peace can come to that region of Africa only if all Ethiopians and all Eritreans agree to make peace and non-violence their primary ethical values — their motto for life. Peace can come about only if the Ethiopians and the Eritreans act together to transform the current situation, which is dominated by discord and violence, into a culture of peace, of solidarity and of development.

The President: I thank the representative of Cameroon for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Valdivieso (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation wishes to express its pleasure at seeing you, Sir, preside over this very important meeting of the Security Council. We also express our gratitude to your country for focusing the Council's attention, in an open format, on the current peace process between Ethiopia and Eritrea. We particularly appreciate Norway's leadership in guiding the Council's work in that region. Since I myself had the honour of participating in the recent mission to those two countries, I can bear witness to the generous support received from your country and to the excellent work done by Ambassador Kolby and his team to make the mission the success that it was.

The Ambassador of Norway gave a very comprehensive briefing on the mission's visit to the capitals of Ethiopia and Eritrea and other regions in the two countries, with all of which my delegation fully agrees. That is why I do not wish to repeat any of his statement. I will confine myself to commenting on three aspects closely related to the observations and recommendations made by the mission.

My first comment relates to the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE). It is clear to our delegation that UNMEE is doing very positive work in the Temporary Security Zone between the two countries and in its delicate diplomatic task. Its presence should be maintained, first, so long as it enjoys the consent of the two parties and, secondly, until the conclusion of the border delimitation and demarcation process, in accordance with the provisions of the Algiers Agreements of June and December 2000. We believe that this presence will be all the more necessary during the sensitive border demarcation phase to follow the decision of the Boundary Commission late this month. We therefore urge the two countries to facilitate freedom of movement and to cooperate closely so that UNMEE may duly finish its work.

My second comment concerns the promotion of constructive dialogue between the two countries. The re-establishment of friendly relations and good-neighbourliness between Ethiopia and Eritrea is an objective that is in the interests of the two peoples and of the international community as a whole. Nonetheless, during our visit we noted that additional efforts are necessary if that goal is to be met. We therefore wish to join in the appeal to the friends of Ethiopia and Eritrea, the guarantors, the facilitators and the witnesses of the peace process to help promote a constructive dialogue between those two peoples. It is also for that reason that it is essential to insist on the appeal to the parties to refrain from taking any unilateral action counter to the spirit and scope of the Agreements.

We believe that the Organization of African Unity (OAU) has a particularly important role to play in this respect. It was thanks to the work of its Chairman for the year 2000, President Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria, that a cessation of hostilities and a peace agreement were achieved. The members of the OAU must therefore continue to support the peace process

and to contribute to reconciliation in the Horn of Africa.

My third comment concerns the social situation in the Temporary Security Zone. Wars leave wounds, marks of destruction and manifestations of poverty. We saw all of these in the area monitored by the United Nations Mission, where refugees and displaced persons require care, homes must be built, communications infrastructure repaired and, ultimately, confidence restored. We urge the international donors to contribute generously to the Consolidated Appeals process to meet humanitarian needs for 2002. This is a first step in the process of economic reconstruction following the devastation of war.

I cannot conclude without placing on record my delegation's gratitude to the countries that contribute troops to UNMEE, whose professionalism and readiness to serve were obvious to us on our visit to the region. We also thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the region, Ambassador Legwaila Joseph Legwaila, and the United Nations team in Addis Ababa and Asmara. The success of our work for peace will depend to a great extent on their dedication and efforts.

The President: I thank the representative of Colombia for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Doutriaux (France) (*spoke in French*): I wish at the outset to welcome you personally, Sir, to the Security Council on the occasion of this important debate and to thank Norway and Ambassador Ole Peter Kolby for having led and organized the recent mission of members of the Security Council to Ethiopia and Eritrea at a particularly timely moment in the completion of the peace process between those two countries.

The Ambassador will shortly make a statement on behalf of the European Union with which France quite clearly associates itself. I would just like to make four comments in my national capacity.

First, the Security Council carried out the mission it set itself by sending a clear message to the two parties. Ethiopia and Eritrea are both fully committed to respecting the forthcoming decision of the Boundary Commission, and we welcome that commitment. They are thus bound to implement all parts of the decision to be announced in late March, in close cooperation with the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

Secondly, my country supports the Security Council's resolve to assist both parties in applying the decision of the Boundary Commission, the practical implementation of which we would wish to see as soon as possible. We strongly urge the parties to refrain from taking any unilateral action that could have destabilizing effects in the regions concerned and encourage them to open a dialogue forthwith.

Thirdly, the mission observed on the ground the humanitarian consequences of the conflict for the populations of both countries. France hopes that the new phase of the peace process to begin with the Boundary Commission's decision will permit the lasting reintegration of displaced persons and the ongoing release of all prisoners of war and civilian detainees.

Fourthly, the mission noted the efforts being made by the leaders of religious communities in both countries to develop ties with civil society. France welcomes those initiatives and hopes that they will be followed by other confidence-building measures aimed at reconciling the two countries in all spheres.

Since the signing of the Algiers Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities, Ethiopia and Eritrea have had the wisdom to respect the ceasefire and security measures imposed in the Temporary Security Zone. The implementation of the decision of the Boundary Commission will open a new phase leading to the final completion of the peace process between the two parties.

France ardently hopes that Ethiopia and Eritrea will be able to seize this opportunity for their peoples, who aspire to lasting peace and the continuation of reconstruction and economic development programmes conducted by the international agencies, the importance of which the Council was able fully to assess on its mission to the region.

France will make its contribution to the efforts to be undertaken by the Security Council in coming weeks to draft a resolution defining the role that UNMEE will continue to play in the demarcation process, aimed at implementing the mission's recommendations, which we fully endorse.

The President: I thank the representative of France for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Corr (Ireland): It is an honour, Sir, to have you chair this meeting of the Council this morning. It is also a reflection of the commitment of Norway to Africa, in particular the Horn of Africa.

On behalf of my delegation, I would like to take this opportunity to commend the leadership of Ambassador Kolby during the Council mission to Eritrea and Ethiopia, and to thank him and all his colleagues in the Norwegian delegation. Ambassador Kolby's wise approach, skill and dedication in leading the mission, and in conveying to both parties the views of the Council at this important juncture, were greatly appreciated by all members of the mission.

I would also like to thank everyone in the Secretariat who was involved, including in the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and everyone in the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) for their work in support of the mission. Finally, it is also right to thank the leadership of both Governments for their hospitality and support throughout the mission.

My delegation associates itself fully with the statement that Spain will make shortly on behalf of the European Union. The report of the Council mission makes a number of observations that Ambassador Kolby detailed earlier, and my delegation fully supports all the observations and recommendations in the report. Therefore, I would like to focus on just a few points.

During the mission, it was quite clear from our meetings with political and religious leaders, the United Nations country teams, representatives of the World Bank and civil society and non-governmental organizations in both countries that the focus must now turn towards the future, including the long-term economic development of both Ethiopia and Eritrea. For far too long, both countries have suffered from food insecurity and underdevelopment. In addition to the immediate suffering brought about by conflict, the war absorbed meagre national resources, with devastating impact on the populations of both countries.

The fact that both Governments have committed themselves to putting that past behind them, to building a peaceful future through implementation of the determination of the Boundary Commission and to focusing on the pressing humanitarian and development needs of their people is to be strongly commended. It is our sincere hope that both parties may see beyond their current differences to the myriad advantages that neighbourly relations offer the respective peoples, particularly in the border areas, where normal life cannot be suspended indefinitely. These two peoples and these two countries have suffered enough. Wisdom is now putting their past divisions behind them.

It is quite clear that the determination of the Boundary Commission should be implemented quickly, in a coordinated and orderly fashion. When signing the Algiers Agreements, both parties rightly recognized the assistance that the United Nations can offer in that process. We strongly encourage both parties to cooperate fully with UNMEE in developing, as quickly as possible, a common understanding of the steps to be taken and to elaborate the appropriate institutional arrangements to ensure that stability prevails and that further human suffering is minimized. In so doing, we strongly urge them to accord maximum cooperation to UNMEE, particularly regarding the security arrangements. Clearly, it will be important that the separation of forces, as achieved by the Temporary Security Zone, continue. We encourage the international community to take on its corresponding obligations to support and encourage that process.

It is widely recognized that the demarcation process will require a massive demining effort. While primary responsibility for this task lies with the parties, we would support the Secretary-General's considering what practical role UNMEE could play to expedite this work. After all, it is clear under the Algiers Agreement that UNMEE's mandate will not be completed until such time as demarcation is complete. Ireland is prepared to consider any recommendations regarding the UNMEE mandate that implementation of the Boundary Commission decision will necessitate.

We warmly commend the dedication of the men and women working with UNMEE and their contribution to the peace process. In particular, I would like to emphasize Ireland's full support for the untiring efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Legwaila, and the Force Commander, and we encourage the parties to cooperate fully with them in the coming period.

Finally, I would like to reaffirm Ireland's support for and friendship with both Eritrea and Ethiopia. The presence of more than 200 Irish troops at UNMEE and

our long-term commitment to development in the region illustrate our confidence that both parties will take this historic opportunity to turn away from a difficult past and work together towards a better future for their peoples.

The President: I thank the representative of Ireland for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Tafrov (Bulgaria) *(spoke in French)*: Thank you, Sir, for presiding over the Council this morning, at a moment when we are discussing an important problem — that of Eritrea and Ethiopia.

Like the others, I should like to express the gratitude of Bulgaria for the important role played by Norway in the Council's efforts to bring about a settlement of this conflict. The leadership of Ambassador Kolby in the mission was remarkable. We warmly thank him and his associates for the extraordinary work they have done.

Bulgaria associates itself with the statement that will be made shortly on behalf of the European Union by the Ambassador of Spain, but I should like to make some brief remarks on behalf of my country.

My country welcomes the results of the mission and believes that it has fulfilled its task of preparing for the next stage of the peace process, which should come at the end of March 2002, after the announcement of the definitive juridical decision of the Boundary Commission. We note with satisfaction the public announcements by the Prime Minister of Ethiopia and the President of Eritrea during the mission, reaffirming that the decisions by the Boundary Commission would be final and binding. These announcements allow us to hope that the two parties will seriously seek a durable solution to their territorial dispute.

Now it is fundamental to focus the attention of the international community and the Security Council on the importance of the application of the Commission's forthcoming decision. The Council should make its own contribution. We believe that the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) must continue to carry out its mandate throughout the period of implementation of all the commitments deriving from the decision of the Boundary Commission. The Temporary Security Zone should remain in place throughout the demarcation process.

The problem of demining is crucial not only for the success of the demarcation process but also for the return of refugees. While the essential responsibility for the task lies with the two parties, as indicated by the Algiers Agreements, it is important that UNMEE provide all the necessary support so that the demining can be a success in terms of allowing the demarcation process to be completed.

Bulgaria encourages both Governments to continue to promote mutual trust and the establishment of a favourable climate. We welcome the mission's fruitful meetings with the religious leaders of the two countries, and we emphasize the positive effect of those meetings on reconciliation and rapprochement between the two peoples.

My delegation is deeply concerned at the grave humanitarian consequences of the conflict. That conflict has given rise to massive population displacements and a great increase in the need for emergency food aid. The international community must make all its resources available to ease the crisis. We support the report's recommendations in that regard and call on Member States to make generous contributions to the consolidated appeals for 2002. My delegation welcomes the close and productive cooperation among humanitarian agencies and non-governmental organizations, which is a true example of partnership.

Let me conclude by paying tribute to the civilian and military men and women of UNMEE for their professionalism and commitment. During our visit, we were impressed by the remarkable results that UNMEE has attained and by the Mission's contribution to the peace process. My country is grateful to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Legwaila, for his tireless efforts to help create conditions conducive to the establishment of lasting peace in the area. I reaffirm my delegation's full support for the efforts he is making in difficult conditions.

The President: I thank the representative of Bulgaria for his kind words.

Mr. Mekdad (Syrian Arab Republic) *(spoke in Arabic)*: The delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic is pleased, Mr. Minister, to see you presiding over this open meeting of the Security Council to discuss the report of the Council mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea. We appreciate the contribution of your friendly

country, which provided the facilities needed to ensure the mission's success.

Let me also express our profound appreciation for the enormous efforts of Ambassador Ole Peter Kolby, who led the Security Council mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea with success. We listened carefully to his presentation of the mission's detailed report to the Council.

The Syrian Arab Republic agrees with previous speakers that this was a timely mission, taking place soon before the decision of the Boundary Commission that will demarcate the border between Ethiopia and Eritrea by the end of this month. My delegation feels that the message sent by the mission to both parties was a direct reflection of the interest of the international community and of the Security Council in reaching a peaceful settlement of the situation of conflict between the two countries. That conflict has cost thousands of lives and has displaced many innocent civilians on both sides.

We are confident that peace based on justice and on the principles of international law will ultimately lead to building relations founded on equality and mutual respect between the two countries. Such a peace would also help promote friendship and development between the two neighbouring peoples.

Syria welcomes the possibility of a legal settlement on the boundary in the near future, in accordance with the Algiers Agreements. We commend the leaders of the two countries for their statements confirming their readiness to accept the decision of the Boundary Commission. That demonstrates the commitment of the two parties to the peace process.

My delegation pays tribute here to the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) for the role it is playing, in cooperation with the two parties, to improve the living conditions of the population, especially in the Temporary Security Zone. In that regard, my delegation is confident that the two parties will fully cooperate with UNMEE in working towards a common understanding on ways and means to implement the forthcoming decision of the Boundary Commission.

The report of the Council mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea is comprehensive, transparently reporting on all the mission's activities. We believe that the observations and recommendations set out in part IV of the report deserve the full attention of the Council and of the two neighbouring countries. In particular, my delegation supports the mission's appeal to the guarantors, the facilitators and the witnesses of the peace process, the Organization of African Unity and the friends of Eritrea and Ethiopia to continue to intensify their contacts with the authorities of both countries, in order to promote a constructive dialogue with the aim of opening a new page in the history of their relations. We also support the recommendations urging donors to respond generously to the United Nations Trust Fund to Support the Peace Process established for the purpose of promoting assistance projects.

We believe that the renewal of the mandate of UNMEE for a further six-month period, on which a decision will soon be taken, would help strengthen stability and peace in the region.

Over the years, the Horn of Africa has endured fierce conflicts and disastrous situations. Consequently, the international community is duty-bound to make further efforts to put an end to those conflicts and those disastrous situations by working towards stability and development. Here, we are very optimistic about the possibility of settling the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea, which would be a first step towards settling other problems in that important and sensitive region.

The President: I thank the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Diallo (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): Your presence here today, Mr. Minister, once again reflects your country's continued great interest in questions affecting the African continent. My delegation is very pleased to see you presiding over this meeting on the situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia, and even more so because your country and you yourself have devoted special attention to addressing the crisis there. My delegation welcomes the many efforts that have been made towards a fair settlement of the conflict.

We are duly awaiting the forthcoming announcement of the decision of the independent Boundary Commission, which is responsible for demarcation of the border between the two countries. We welcome recent statements by the two parties reaffirming that that decision will be final and binding. But the period following the announcement of the decision could be fraught with uncertainties, and the

necessary measures must be adopted to ensure that the parties meet their commitments, with a view to bringing about the peaceful completion of subsequent phases. In that regard, a mechanism is quickly needed to facilitate the demining of the area so that the Boundary Commission can proceed without delay to the demarcation and delimitation of the border.

While the demining operation falls under the responsibility of the two States, it seems clear that, due to a lack of financial resources, it cannot be carried out effectively without outside assistance. We believe that this task must be entrusted to the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), on the basis of the "no exit without strategy" principle. We are convinced, Mr. President, that your country, which has already made so many diplomatic and financial efforts to bring the two parties closer, will play a leading role in this regard.

Moreover, my delegation appeals to the various actors of the peace process to further strengthen their relations with the authorities of the two countries to promote a constructive dialogue that is capable of strengthening confidence-building measures.

My delegation is convinced that the effective implementation of the Algiers Agreement will not only contribute to bringing about a lasting settlement of the conflict, but will also allow, we hope, the traditional ties between the Ethiopian and Eritrean peoples to be strengthened. We encourage the donor community to continue its efforts for the urgent mobilization of the means necessary to cover the enormous humanitarian needs resulting from this fratricidal conflict.

I wish to say, in conclusion, that the Guinean Government fully supports the recommendations of the Security Council mission report and wishes to express its thanks to Ambassador Kolby for the effectiveness with which he conducted the mission.

The President: I thank the representative of Guinea for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Harrison (United Kingdom): I first join others in welcoming you, Mr. President, as you preside over this meeting.

The delegation of Spain will be speaking later on behalf of the European Union. My delegation naturally endorses what it will say. I would just like to make one or two points of detail.

First, my delegation would like to join others in congratulating Ambassador Kolby for the way he led the recent mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea and also to congratulate Ambassador Legwaila and the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) on their tireless work.

It is obvious that the decision shortly to be announced by the Boundary Commission will have considerable importance for the future of the peace process and the stability of the region. As the Boundary Commission's decision grows nearer, we believe that it is important for the international community to engage more deeply in the peace process, particularly the guarantors of the peace process and regional organizations, including the Organization of African Unity.

But a second point about the Boundary Commission's ruling is that it will not be the end of the peace process. Indeed, the current arrangements on the ground will have to remain in place and the outstanding obstacles to the peace process, including the areas of Eritrean non-compliance, will need to be resolved. The demarcation process itself may not be completed until 2004. But once the Boundary Commission's position is known, it will be important to inject early momentum into that demarcation process. The demining that will be needed to allow demarcation to take place will be a major undertaking, and it may prove to be beyond the capacity of the two parties. So the Council may need to consider whether to extend UNMEE's role to cover this area of activity at the renewal of the mandate in a few days' time.

Finally, I should like to say that we welcome the meeting of the religious leaders of the two countries. We believe that events like that can only help the normalization of bilateral relations at all levels, which is so important for the peace process.

The President: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom for his kind words.

Mr. Koonjul (Mauritius): Allow me, first of all, to congratulate you, Mr. President, and your delegation on organizing today's meeting and on giving us the opportunity to comment on the report of the Security Council mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Before going into the substantive issues, I would also like to congratulate Ambassador Peter Kolby for his excellent leadership of the mission and for

introducing the report today. Norway attaches great importance to the Ethiopia-Eritrea peace process, as has been demonstrated by the significant contribution it made in financing the work of the Boundary Commission. I would also like to thank the Government of Norway for providing us with the aircraft which facilitated our mission. Our thanks also go to the Governments of Ethiopia and Eritrea for their very warm hospitality and, of course, to Ambassador Legwaila, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) and the members of the Security Council Secretariat for preparing the mission and for the facilities provided to the members of the mission.

The mission to the two countries has been extremely useful, as it has allowed members of the Council to have first-hand information on the activities of UNMEE on the ground. The meetings with the United Nations country teams and the diplomatic corps in both countries, as well as with the religious leaders, provided us with insight into the underlying complexities of the Ethiopian-Eritrean conflict.

We commend the report of the mission, which faithfully reflects the substance of the meetings and contains a set of observations and recommendations to which we fully subscribe.

We believe that the mission to the two countries was indeed very timely and opportune, especially in the light of the much-awaited decision of the Boundary Commission later this month.

As we are entering a crucial stage in the peace process, we welcome the commitments with regard to the upcoming decisions of the Boundary Commission that the leadership of both Ethiopia and Eritrea reiterated during our mission to the two countries. The commitment of the two sides to abide by the decisions of the Boundary Commission as per their undertakings under the Algiers Agreement constitutes a very important step in forging a sustained peace between the countries.

As highlighted in the mission report, we discussed with the two parties the various steps relating to the implementation of the decisions of the Boundary Commission. Once the decisions are known later this month, it will be extremely important for the two sides to sit together with UNMEE to discuss ways and means of implementing them. We would like to mention that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ambassador Legwaila, and his team, who have our full trust and support, will have a very important role to play in the months ahead. To ensure smooth implementation of the decisions of the Boundary Commission, the guarantors, facilitators and witnesses of the Ethiopian-Eritrean peace process should continue to use their good offices to urge the two sides to live up to their obligations under the Algiers Agreement.

Norway, as we can see, attaches great importance to this file of the Council, and we would like to suggest that Norway also use its good offices to complement Ambassador Legwaila's work of ensuring that the two parties implement the decisions of the Boundary Commission.

Once the decisions of the Commission are known, it will be of utmost importance for the two sides to refrain from any unilateral action that could have negative repercussions on the peace process. We highlighted this aspect during our mission to the two countries and we do likewise today. Hence, all issues pertaining to the movement of population or troops should be addressed only through dialogue within the framework to be established by the United Nations through the good offices of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ambassador Legwaila.

During our mission, we had the opportunity to visit a school where children's awareness of landmines is being raised. Indeed, anti-personnel landmines continue to hinder the proper return of internally displaced persons. When we met with the leadership of the two countries, we urged them to live up to their commitments under the Algiers Agreement to cooperate fully in ensuring an expeditious demining process, which will take us to the demarcation stage.

There is no doubt that the continued presence of UNMEE in Ethiopia and Eritrea will be of extreme importance until the demarcation and delimitation process is successfully completed. My delegation is ready to explore all possibilities that might ensure that the demining required for paving the way for a successful demarcation process is efficiently carried out in a timely manner. It is in this spirit that we would like to approach the draft resolution that would extend the mandate of UNMEE. We are also ready to consider a change in the mandate of UNMEE to include demining activities.

The President: I thank the representative of Mauritius for his kind words addressed to me.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Norway.

I should like to make a couple of comments. First, I would like to commend the Security Council for agreeing to send a mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea at this important stage of the peace process. This mission underlines the strong, supportive commitment of the international community and its desire to understand the parties and engage them in a constructive dialogue on the way forward.

I would also like to commend the parties for their commitment to implement fully the Algiers Agreements. I met personally with the leaders of the two countries in Addis Ababa and Asmara in the days immediately before the visit by the Security Council mission. I praised both countries for having opted for an international legal mechanism for resolving the conflict by peaceful means. I also commended them for giving the United Nations such a central role in implementing the Boundary Commission's decision.

A final settlement, based on the forthcoming decision of the Boundary Commission, is about to be reached. Ethiopia and Eritrea, with the assistance of the international community, will be able to embark on and again concentrate all their efforts on their economic and social development, with the support of the world community. With the peaceful resolution of the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea, the enhancement of peace and stability in the rest of the Horn of Africa could also gain momentum.

On the eve of the decision of the Commission, the message from the international community is unambiguous: the United Nations and the international community will continue their support to help implement the practical and physical demarcation of the border, thus consolidating the achievements of peace.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Eritrea. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Seyoum (Eritrea): I am grateful for the opportunity that has been given to my delegation to participate in the Council's open discussion this morning on the agenda item on the situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia. My delegation is delighted to see Norway, the very country that led the Council mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea at the end of February 2002, presiding over this organ of the United Nations for the current month of March. I wish to begin, therefore, by congratulating the presidency both for its indispensable guidance and for a job well done in leading the purposeful mission to our troubled region.

At the outset, my delegation wishes to thank the Security Council mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea for its extensive report of 27 February 2002, contained in document S/2002/205, which is under consideration at this meeting. Indeed, the report reflects the success of the mission and my delegation shares the joy of this remarkable success. My delegation notes with satisfaction that the mission was able to visit a great many places and meet with a great many people in a very short time.

My delegation wishes to thank the Security Council members for the visit that they undertook to my country. This was an eloquent demonstration of the goodwill and commitment of the international community to the peace process between my country and Ethiopia. We are thankful for your continued support, Mr. President. We notice with pride that the mission met with His Excellency Mr. Isaias Afwerki, the President of the State of Eritrea, in Asmara, and was able to adequately address many, if not all, of the issues directly related to the peace process. Having given that assurance, therefore, I do not wish to repeat myself. However, I feel duty-bound to say that I will re-emphasize a couple of points later in my statement.

My delegation notes with great interest that the main focus of the mission was to create awareness of the importance of looking to the future — looking to the crucial tasks to be carried out following the Boundary Commission's decision later this month. My Government highly commends the Council for its wisdom, and could not agree more with the proposal for the swift implementation of the Boundary Commission's decision, as stated in paragraph 35 (*a*) of the report. In this regard, I am pleased to report to the Council that, on 25 February 2002, my Government responded positively, to the Commission's request for Eritrea's permission for the overflights for aerial photography.

The people and the Government of Eritrea are looking forward to a bright future. Their optimism was well expressed by President Isaias Afwerki, when he addressed the mission on 24 February in Asmara. He said,

> "My optimism is based on the hope that the Boundary Commission's decision, in accordance with the principle of the sanctity of colonial boundaries — a fundamental principle that cannot be tampered with on this continent — will shortly set to rest the underlying causes of this unfortunate war. If, indeed, it was misunderstanding about location of the colonial boundary that caused the conflict, both countries should soon be able to move beyond the current atmosphere of suspicion and mistrust and to restore mutually beneficial bonds of good neighbourliness between their two sisterly peoples. Under such circumstances, demarcation based on the colonial boundaries should not be expected to pose serious problems."

The international community has watched the Eritrean people endure a struggle for peace for over 30 years. They thought they had found it in 1991, when the war between their country and Ethiopia ended for the good of the two peoples. Unfortunately, that peace was cut short by another round of conflict in 1998, arising out of a territorial claim. That is the conflict whose lasting resolution the Security Council and other partners are engaged in helping to bring about.

A remarkable woman of inspiration, Helen Keller, once said, "I do not want the peace that passeth understanding. I want the understanding which bringeth peace". This time, the Eritrean people are looking not for a peace which is merely the absence of war, but for a lasting peace in abundance. This time, it cannot be a "hit or miss" business; it should be a "hit", with pure justice. The Eritrean people have been longing for that precious peace for many years. I fervently hope that they find it this time, and keep it forever. We should not fail them.

Allow me now to underline two issues that President Isaias Afwerki raised in his meeting with you, Mr. President, and with the members of the mission, in Asmara. These two issues deserve the utmost attention because they both have humanitarian implications.

First, as members of the Council are aware, the Temporary Security Zone, which is the cornerstone of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement of 18 June 2000, could not be established due to Ethiopia's refusal to redeploy its troops, in violation of article 14 of the Agreement. As a result of that violation, more than 60,000 Eritrean civilians remain stranded in makeshift camps to this day, making it impossible for them to return to their homes and villages. My delegation is thankful and pleased to note, in paragraph 32 of the report, that the mission was able to visit some 5,000 of those internally displaced persons around the Senafe area.

The mission was witness to the conditions that those men, women and children are living in. It saw them and talked to them. They communicated their horrible conditions in a very powerful way. I believe the mission came back convinced that their living conditions are unacceptable. We should send them home to their villages. It would be unjust to continue to keep them in those camps. I appeal to the Council and the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) to help us create the conditions for those people to return.

Secondly, article 8 of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement provides for prompt demining activities by both parties

> "with a view to creating the conditions necessary for the deployment of the Peacekeeping Mission, the return of civilian administration and the return of the population as well as the delimitation and demarcation of their common border". (*S/2000/601, annex, art. 8*)

That vital treaty obligation remains unfulfilled by Ethiopia, which, for no justifiable reason, has refused to provide UNMEE with detailed landmine information. Therefore, my delegation cannot help but join the mission in its appeal to Ethiopia to submit detailed landmine information. Provision of that information assumes added urgency today because the task of expeditious demarcation — and ultimate peace between the countries — will depend on rapid completion of mine clearance, especially along the common boundary.

We note with deep concern the Security Council's appeal for an orderly transfer of administration and for population returns and its caution against unilateral action without urging Ethiopia to respect its treaty

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obligations. Ethiopia has already violated those obligations and has frustrated the implementation of the Agreements by dilatory tactics such as those of the last two years. My Government would simply like to flag the practicality of that intention, as we already know of one party's unilateral violation of prior agreements. My delegation begs the Council's understanding in this matter.

While I am on the issue of landmines, my Government wishes to thank all those who contributed to the demining project.

I wish to conclude my statement by recalling that the Council is meeting this morning at the eleventh hour in the delivery of the decision of the Boundary Commission. I bring this up not to make it sensational or to add more anxiety, but to share my delegation's optimism and that of the President of Eritrea. The peoples of Eritrea and Ethiopia are earnestly waiting for that decision with hope, in anticipation of "opening a new page in the history of their relations" in genuine peace and freedom. In that respect, we cannot agree more with former President Herbert Hoover, who said, "Peace is not made at the Council table or by treaties, but in the hearts of men", and, I would add, women.

Finally, the Government of Eritrea wishes to thank all our partners and the actors in the peace process for their invaluable effort. The same goes to those who contributed to the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of the Delimitation and Demarcation of the Ethiopia-Eritrea Border. My Government appeals to the international community to contribute more to the Trust Fund. The recent announcement of a $1 million contribution by the Government of Norway is most gratifying.

Again, my warmest congratulations to you, Mr. President, on a successful mission.

The President: I thank the representative of Eritrea for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Ethiopia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Tessema (Ethiopia): On behalf of the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, I would like to express our appreciation to you, Mr. Foreign Minister, for convening this debate and for your delegation's leadership of the Council's mission to our region. We are doubly gratified to see you here after you honoured us by visiting our capital a few days prior to the Council's mission. We also want to express our special thanks to Ambassador Kolby for his effective leadership in facilitating the Security Council's mission to both Ethiopia and Eritrea.

My Government appreciated the recent visit by the Security Council mission to my country. We are convinced that it will contribute immensely to moving the peace process forward and to resolving some of the outstanding issues that might hamper the full implementation of the Algiers Agreement and the upcoming decision of the Boundary Commission. We believe that the visit has accorded Council members a first-hand opportunity to appreciate the concerns raised repeatedly by my Government.

I would like once again to highlight some of the outstanding issues that were raised by my Prime Minister during the Council's mission and that need to be resolved before the announcement of the Boundary Commission's decision.

First, the Temporary Security Zone established by the Algiers Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities to serve as a buffer zone separating the two armies has to be fully demilitarized and should remain so until the demarcation process is completed. We have serious concerns that the Temporary Security Zone is not fully demilitarized. It continues to be infiltrated by regular army in the name of militia and police. The Security Council should see to it that this issue is resolved sooner rather than later.

Secondly, Ethiopia also believes that the status of forces agreement, which governs the presence of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), should be signed. Each party is required to sign the agreement with the United Nations to formalize UNMEE's legal presence in their respective countries. It should be recalled that Ethiopia signed such a status of forces agreement about a year ago, long before the deadline. Eritrea has not yet singed the agreement.

Thirdly, Ethiopia has continued to ensure that UNMEE enjoys freedom of movement, including within the 15-kilometer area adjacent to the southern boundary of the Temporary Security Zone. We would like to see UNMEE be granted the same right by the other party, a right that is needed for the physical demarcation of the boundary. Defiance and denial of

that right have caused serious problems in the past and remain of major concern to my Government.

Fourthly, on the point reiterated by some Council members regarding direct high-altitude flights for the United Nations, a proposal was submitted by UNMEE to the two parties. Ethiopia asked for a two-minute deviation east or west of the proposed route, agreeing to all other possibilities. We hope that issue will also be resolved once and for all with Council consultation with the other party.

We are now at a very critical stage in the peace process between Ethiopia and Eritrea, as has been reiterated by many Council members. We are looking forward to welcoming the judicial and impartial verdict of the Boundary Commission, to be announced during the latter part of this month. We would not want to see any of the outstanding issues or non-compliance with the Algiers Agreement jeopardize the peace process or the implementation of the forthcoming decision of the Boundary Commission.

We believe that the decision of the Boundary Commission should not be under any political influence, nor should its outcome be politicized, in whatever form, by any third party. We believe that the decision of the Boundary Commission ought to be a judicial decision, with full transparency and void of any political considerations or pressures. My Government has so far implemented and observed the Algiers Agreement and is committed to the full implementation of such an outcome.

The President: I thank the representative of Ethiopia for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Spain. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Arias (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am delighted, Sir, to see you presiding over the Council today.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, as well as the European Free Trade Association country members of the European Economic Area — Iceland — align themselves with this statement.

The European Union (EU) wishes to express its appreciation to the Norwegian presidency for having convened this public debate on the report of the Security Council mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea. We welcome the report and the opportunity it provides for Member States to share their assessments as we enter this crucial period of the ongoing peace process between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

The European Union reiterates its full support for the Peace Agreement signed in Algiers on 12 December 2000 as well for as the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities signed in Algiers on 18 June of the same year. In this context, we look forward to the border delimitation determination by the Boundary Commission. The EU welcomes recent statements by the parties reaffirming that the decision of the Boundary Commission is final and binding, and the commitment of each to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the other party, in accordance with the Algiers Agreement.

The announcement by the Boundary Commission of its decision in the next few weeks will complete the first phase of the ongoing peace process. The EU expects the parties to ensure that the process of implementation of the demarcation of the Ethiopian-Eritrean border will commence immediately and proceed expeditiously, in a coordinated manner, while stability is maintained in all areas affected by the decision.

The EU expresses its full support for the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) and for the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ambassador Legwaila. Next week the Security Council will consider the extension of UNMEE's mandate. We look forward in this regard to the recommendations of the Secretary-General, with a view to providing an overall framework for the implementation phase and for the appropriate role of UNMEE. We would recall the pivotal role to be played by the United Nations, as set out in the Algiers Agreement, in implementing the decision of the Boundary Commission, and we urge the parties to cooperate fully with UNMEE in implementing that decision and to keep communications open with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General during this crucial period.

The EU shares the view of the Security Council mission that, in order to facilitate the implementation phase, the institutional framework for the peace process will need to be developed further, particularly through appropriate strengthening of the Military Coordination Commission, as well as through other mechanisms based on dialogue between the parties and their full cooperation with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. The EU stands ready to offer what assistance it can.

The EU wishes to emphasize that, according to the Algiers agreements, the mandate of the United Nations peacekeeping mission will end when the process of delimitation and demarcation of the Ethiopian-Eritrean border has been completed. Accordingly, we attach the utmost importance to the continuation of the arrangements for the separation of the forces, as achieved by the establishment of the Temporary Security Zone. It is equally important that, in order to maintain stability, the parties refrain from any unilateral actions, including movements of population and troops.

Demarcation is a physical process that must necessarily take place on the ground. The border region involved in the dispute remains heavily mined, which poses a major threat to the population and to the United Nations personnel operating in the area. Demining is an essential preliminary step to border demarcation. In this regard, the EU reminds the parties of their primary responsibility and urges them to cooperate fully to ensure expeditious demining. UNMEE's mandate should be adjusted, as necessary, to allow it to play a full and appropriate role in the demarcation process.

In the context of confidence-building measures, we call on the parties immediately to release and return unconditionally all the remaining prisoners of war and all those detained as a result of the armed conflict. It is also important to ensure a sustainable reintegration of refugees, internally displaced persons and demobilized soldiers. The EU calls on the parties urgently to resolve all other outstanding issues, including the full freedom of movement of UNMEE.

The demarcation of the border and the implementation of confidence-building measures are key steps towards the normalization of relations between these neighbouring countries. The overall objective of the peace process is reconciliation, reconstruction and development, for the benefit of their peoples. The EU calls on the Governments of Ethiopia and Eritrea to move towards normalization and lasting reconciliation.

We are encouraged by the joint meetings of religious leaders held on 14 and 15 February in Asmara and Addis Ababa. We stress the particular importance of promoting cross-border contacts at the local level, rebuilding community relations, and the role that women can play in this regard.

The consolidation of peace between both countries will contribute to relaunching the process of regional cooperation and integration. Regional cooperation is of vital importance for stable and sustainable development in the Horn of Africa, which remains an area of particular concern for the EU. We note in this regard the signing of the protocol on the establishment of an early warning and early response mechanism for conflicts at the ninth Inter-Governmental Authority on Development Summit, held on 11 January.

To conclude, the European Union, as a witness and co-signatory of the Algiers Comprehensive Peace Agreement, remains committed to continuing its support of the peace process, particularly through the Special Representative of the Presidency, Senator Serri. We will continue to provide assistance to the populations affected by the conflict and by other humanitarian disasters, such as the current drought. With continued progress in the peace process, the European Union wishes to support peace-building, reconstruction and development and to contribute to the launching of a dialogue on confidence-building measures and efforts towards normalization, cooperation on all aspects of mutual interest and lasting reconciliation between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

The President: I thank the representative of Spain for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of the Netherlands. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Van den Berg (Netherlands): I congratulate the Security Council on a timely and a successful mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea and I thank it for its comprehensive report. During the mission, many issues were raised and discussed with a variety of actors across the spectrum in both countries and we support

the observations and recommendations made in the report.

The Netherlands also supports and associates itself fully with the statement made by the representative of Spain on behalf of the European Union.

We feel that today's meeting of the Council is important because the peace process in Ethiopia and Eritrea is nearing a critical moment with the forthcoming decision of the Boundary Commission. We welcome the fact that the parties have consistently made clear that they will accept the decision of the Boundary Commission as final and binding.

We feel that the formal presentation of the decision of the Boundary Commission should be accompanied by a setting and manner that justify the importance of the decision. After all, with the delimitation of the boundary, it is for the parties to turn away from the past and to look towards the future. We therefore sincerely hope that this milestone event will take place in such a way that Ethiopians, Eritreans and, in fact, the whole world can witness this crucial moment and that it will provide leaders of both countries with a unique opportunity to restate their solemn commitment to the peace process. The international community can then respond by expressing its full support for both countries.

During its membership of the Council, the Netherlands paid a great deal of attention to the issue of exit strategies for peacekeeping operations. Exit should be based on the successful fulfilment of a mission's mandate and therefore be linked to a clear objective. In the case of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), that objective is clear. The Algiers Agreements link the termination of UNMEE with the completion of the demarcation of the border.

Ultimately, it is the implementation that will conclude the peace process. It is essential that the start of demarcation begin immediately after the delivery of the decision. Implementing the decision of the Boundary Commission is, however, an extensive logistical and managerial process that cannot simply be left to the Commission. It is therefore essential that the United Nations support this process from the beginning. Here, we see an important role for UNMEE in providing the required logistical and managerial support for the demarcation and in establishing the necessary conditions, such as through demining operations along the border. Attention should be paid to possible transboundary movement of populations and internally displaced persons, the transfer of authority over territory and many other issues. We feel that all of this should be thoroughly discussed as soon as possible and decided upon by all parties concerned. The outcome of these discussions should be reflected in an adjusted mandate for UNMEE. It is also important that we have realistic budgetary estimates available on the costs of the demarcation process.

Finally, I would like to assure you, Sir, that your recommendation to, inter alia, the friends of Eritrea and Ethiopia in paragraph 36 (a) of the report of the Council's mission that they continue to intensify their contacts with the authorities of both countries will not be left unheard. As the Chairman of the Group of Friends of Eritrea and Ethiopia, I can assure the Council that the Group of Friends will strive to keep the dialogue going in order to do our part in achieving the ultimate goal of the peace process: full and normalized relations between both countries.

The President: The next speaker on my list is the representative of Japan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Motomura (Japan): At the outset, my delegation would like to welcome Mr. Jan Petersen, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Norway, and to congratulate Norway on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. Allow me as well to extend my congratulations to Ambassador Aguilar Zinser of Mexico and his team for their excellent work last month.

Following the Norwegian practice, I will keep my remarks brief.

Japan welcomes the comprehensive report of the Security Council mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea, headed by Ambassador Ole Peter Kolby of Norway. The report itself demonstrates the success of the mission on the eve of the final and binding decision of the Boundary Commission. Japan hopes that the views gained by the members of the Security Council during their visit to the field will be reflected in the upcoming consideration of the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE).

We commend Ethiopia and Eritrea for choosing to resolve their differences through an international conflict-resolution mechanism and welcome recent statements by both sides reaffirming that the decision of the Boundary Commission is final and binding. In the expectation that all necessary steps for the implementation of the Boundary Commission's decision will commence immediately following the Commission's announcement, Japan welcomes this positive development and hopes that our contribution of approximately $1 million to the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of the Delimitation and Demarcation of the Ethiopia/Eritrea Border will be utilized effectively. I would like to take this opportunity to appeal to both parties to refrain from any action that could have a destabilizing effect, including the movement of peoples as well as troops.

As stated in the report of the Security Council mission, the successful implementation of the Boundary Commission's decision will depend in large part on the demining of the border area. This is also crucial for confidence-building in order to resolve localized disputes and rebuild community relations, particularly through the promotion of cross-border contacts at the local level. In view of the importance of mine clearance, the Government of Japan has decided to earmark approximately $560,000 of its contribution to the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action for the project in the Temporary Security Zone.

Let me conclude by commenting on Security Council missions in general. Security Council missions to the field can be a useful tool, as demonstrated by this latest mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea. In order to ensure that future missions are fruitful, Japan believes it worthwhile to consider establishing criteria for sending missions and ensuring transparency with regard to budgetary basis.

The President: I thank the representative of Japan for his kind words addressed to me.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Kolby, head of the Security Council mission to Eritrea and Ethiopia, to respond to the comments made.

Mr. Kolby: I should like to make just a few brief remarks.

With the Boundary Commission decision and its implementation soon before us, I believe that the most important thing now will be for all of us to look forward to the important steps ahead. The Ambassador of the Netherlands referred to some of these steps. I think that only in this way can we proceed in a constructive manner.

Secondly, I would draw the Council's attention to the fact that the two leaders, in their remarks to the press after our meetings, characterized the mission as both constructive and timely, and I think these remarks were repeated by the two countries here today. We would like to build further on this foundation in the Council.

Regarding the outstanding issues, the position of the Council has been clearly expressed on several occasions, in the presidential statement adopted in January and reiterated in the report of the mission. These are well-known requirements, and they should be adhered to.

Finally, I would like to underline the very strong, supportive environment confirmed through the mission to the two countries. The international community will stand firmly behind the parties in the implementation of the Algiers Agreements, including the implementation of the Boundary Commission's decision. As we have heard today, I think the Council remains strongly committed to contribute to the completion of the peace process.

The President: There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.

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Security Council

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Official communiqué of the 4486th (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 11 March 2002, at 10 a.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"At its 4486th meeting, held in private on 11 March 2002, the Security Council considered the item entitled 'The situation in Somalia'.

"The President, with the consent of the Council, invited His Excellency Mr. Yusuf Hassan Ibrahim, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Transitional National Government of Somalia, at his request, to participate in the discussion of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

"The members of the Council and the Minister for Foreign Affairs had a constructive discussion."

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